

The Idea of 'Negation' and 'Contrary Progression' in Blake.

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis consists of two parts. The first part is a detailed study of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell in the context of Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and the social background of the eighteenth century. It has five chapters, in the first of which an attempt has been made to sketch an outline of social conditions and relationship in eighteenth century England. There are two reasons for doing this. First, Blake's writings reflect his contemporary social conditions and class conflict. When he attacks Swedenborg, Newton and Locke, for example, he is indeed attacking, as most radical and romantic writers did, the whole social order that they formed and represented. From the evidence thus obtained one may conclude that Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell and Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell must be studied in this social context. 'Heaven' and 'Hell' are not abstract terms. They represent social conditions. 'Heaven' represents the rich and propertied or higher clerical class epitomised by Swedenborg in conflict with 'Hell' which represents the poor and working class epitomised by Blake. Those who are in 'Heaven' are called Angels, and those in 'Hell' Devils. Secondly, Heaven and Hell and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell reflect two contrasting philosophies, two types of social outlook and literature in defence of two opposing interests.

Chapter Two shows first that The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is essentially written as moral criticism of Swedenborg's social system, that 'The Argument' in The



Marriage refers to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and that Rintrah represents Swedenborg as a passive and fallen character who punishes the 'just' man in himself and people in 'Hell'. This theory differs from that of

1. D.V. Erdman. Secondly the suggestion is made that the idea of 'contrary progression' in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell seems to be directly related to Heaven and Hell, a view somewhat at variance with those put forward by the distinguished Blake scholars, Martin K. Nurmi and

2. Miss Kathleen Raine. The chapter concludes that Swedenborg's doctrine of 'contrary states', unlike that of Blake, is based on 'negation' and passivity. The hard active life of the people in the mines or 'Hell' seemed to Swedenborg a 'torment' and 'insanity' but the life in 'Heaven' was delightful. In other words active life was evil and passive life good. From this ratio he develops his theory of 'contrary states' that man has two opposing principles. One is attracted to and agrees with all things that he loves and the other rejects or disagrees with the things that he does not love. Man's being in 'Heaven' or 'Hell' depends on his internal 'driving love'. The reason that Angels are in 'Heaven', for example, is because they have loved what is good and true according to

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1. See Appendix 1.

2. See Appendix 2 and Appendix 4.

the divine order and implanted these principles in their lives. From these opposite principles of 'agreement' and 'disagreement' or 'love' and 'rejection' Swedenborg develops his doctrine of 'contrary states'. Those who love the Lord are in 'Heaven' and those who reject the Lord are in 'Hell'. All good things and delights of 'Heaven' 'come from above' or the Lord. To believe that worldly things excite love and delight in 'Heaven' is contrary to the divine order. Blake, opposing Swedenborg's abstract philosophy of 'good' and 'evil', which have no moral meaning, retorts that 'love', 'affection' and 'attraction' to the good of life, and hate or repulsion of undesirable life, is necessary for human existence; but the delight of Angels comes from 'Energy' which is from the 'Body' or active people in 'Hell', rather than from other sources.

'Energy is the only life, and is from the Body;  
and Reason is the bound or outward circumference  
of Energy'.

The people in 'Hell', whom Swedenborg calls Devils or Giants, are chained and their love of the world or energy are restrained by the passive beings or weak in 'Heaven'.

'The Giants who formed this world into its sensual existence, and now seem to live in it in chains, are in truth the cause of its life & the sources of all activity; but the chains are the cunning of weak and tame minds which have power to resist energy;....'

Evil, or the chains, are within society and are created by the passive Angels in 'Heaven'. To cast this evil out, passive life in 'Heaven' and active life in 'Hell' must marry.



Chapter III suggests that the 'Proverbs of Hell' are also directly related to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and the satirical farce of The Marriage is partly derived from the way Blake appropriated Swedenborg's vocabulary. Some proverbs have been taken as random examples to illustrate the relationship between the two works and to show how Swedenborg used his passive memories in opposition to the active and practical life.

Chapter IV takes the proverb, 'Prisons are built with stones of Law, Brothels with bricks of Religion', and an attempt is made to explain what Blake meant by law and religion. He was not against law and religion as such but condemned the irresponsible law and negative religion which were used as means to protect the interest of 'Heaven' against 'Hell'.

Chapter V discusses Blake's idea of 'Poetic Genius' or the creative mind as opposed to the sense principle, and consideration is given to his conclusion that Priesthood began by the abstraction of 'mental deities' from their objects and environment. Deities are the imaginative or mental forms of sensible objects. The major difference between the mind of human beings and that of the lower animals is a difference in creativity. The mind of man has an unchangeable power which he can apply to his particular environment. Swedenborg had potentially as creative a mind as Blake but he set his limited and passive memories against unlimited and universal or creative man, whereas

Blake stressed the unchangeable and creative mind:

'The true Man is the source, he being the Poetic Genius.'  
'Poetic Genius' is the source because it is unchangeable.  
It applies its unchangeable power to changeable objects  
or the environment.

The second part of this thesis, through the designs  
For The Sexes: The Gates of Paradise, attempts to show  
that Blake's characters are not abstract names, but represent  
human and social beings whose moral values are  
recognized in the course of their social relationships.  
One is prolific who seeks his love at the ease of others  
and 'builds a Heaven in Hell's despair'. He is a part of  
the whole Human existence. The other is a devourer who  
'builds a Hell in Heaven's despite'. He is divided from  
the rest of existence or society while he is, like a worm,  
feeding on the joy of others. Blake fought against this  
selfhood or evil within society all through his life.  
It is in this context that Blake's use of the worm symbol  
must be understood.



## PREFACE

The following thesis is the result of ten years' reading on William Blake. I became interested in Blake while studying in Istanbul in 1959, and while pursuing the problem of 'what is literature for?' I had always this question in mind since graduating in 1956 from the University of Tabriz, Iran. What are the human values of literature and what is its use for society? I found the answer in Blake that true literature and art are concerned with people and their practical life and it is this with which literature must be mainly concerned.

'Can I see another's woe,  
And not be in sorrow too?'

These simple lines from the 'Songs of Innocence' seemed to echo a profound truth. True literature and, indeed, all art must be concerned, directly or indirectly, in another human being's woe or joy. In other words, art is closely linked with social conditions. Can writings which are dominated by the author's selfish and limited memories care about another's woes? To Blake, it could not:

'He who sees the Ratio only, sees himself only'.

Thus I found Blake's art humane, and practical.

A second question that arose after reading his prophetic books was why Blake did not carry on writing as simply as he did in his early works. Again, although not religious in the orthodox sense, why did he seem preoccupied with the terms 'heaven' and 'hell'? This was a mystery to me, but believing that Blake was against mysticism and



all mystification I sought the solution in his social circumstances. I studied the society and conditions in which Blake worked and lived.

I have chosen The Marriage of Heaven and Hell as the central point of my study for three reasons. Firstly, I found in it material relevant to my search for why Blake used particular religious terms and 'unheard of' symbols such as Rintrah in his radical literature. Secondly, a comparison of it with Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell presented a contrast between two opposite types of literature, one representing the abstract and passive memories and the other practical and active life. Thirdly, the idea of 'contraries' and \*The Marriage\* as a whole, which is directly related to the title of my thesis, is still a controversial subject among Blake scholars.

In this research I owe much to Eastern and Western scholars who are interested in human problems. I feel indebted to the late Professor J. Butt for his encouragement and moral support at the beginning of my research, and to Geoffrey Carnall who has been a most helpful supervisor.

Among Blake scholars, to mention only a few of them, I must express my gratitude to Miss Desiree Hirst who helped me while I was in London, and to Sir Geoffrey Keynes, for advice and encouragement of an early stage of my work. Dr. Edward J. Rose and George Samuel of the University of Alberta, and Professor Northrop Frye of the University of Toronto, have all encouraged me by reading and making very

useful comments on my papers.

I must also acknowledge the inspiration I received from Dr. H. Aryanpour's works on the social anthropological study of art and literature (University of Tehran) and the assistance of Mr. H. Philsooph (Ph.D. student in the Department of Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh) who has discussed and made valuable comments on social and philosophical aspects of my thesis. Dr. S. Oakley (of the Department of History, University of Edinburgh) has also given very useful advice on matters of Swedish history.

I should finally like to express my appreciation of the staff of the National Library of Scotland and of the Library of the University of Edinburgh, whom I have found most helpful.

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PART I.

SOCIAL STUDY OF SWEDENBORG'S HEAVEN AND HELL

AND BLAKE'S MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND HELL.

## The Argument.

Rintrah roars & shakes his fires in the burdend air;  
Hungry clouds swag on the deep.

Once meek, and in a perilous path,  
The just man kept his course along  
The vale of death.  
Roses are planted where thorns grow,  
And on the barren heath  
Sing the honey bees.

Then the perilous path was planted:  
And a river, and a spring  
On every cliff and tomb;  
And on the bleached bones  
Red clay brought forth.

Till the villain left the paths of ease,  
To walk in perilous paths, and drive  
The just man into barren climes.

Now the sneaking serpent walks  
In mild humility,  
And the just man rages in the wilds  
Where lions roam.

Rintrah roars & shakes his fires in the  
burdend air;  
Hungry clouds swag on the deep.



## CHAPTER I

### THE 18th-CENTURY SOCIAL BACKGROUND, AND THE BACKGROUND OF SWEDENBORG AND BLAKE.

#### 1. The Eighteenth-Century Background

Writers 'cannot escape' says Shelley 'from subjection to a common influence which arises out of an infinite combination of circumstances belonging to the time in which they live...'<sup>1.</sup> The personality of a writer or poet is mainly formed by his social circumstances and experience. He derives his convictions and ideas from his own experiences of practical life which are both private and public. George Eliot remarked in her Felix Holt that '... there is no private life which has not been determined by a wider public life...'<sup>2.</sup>

In this chapter we attempt to sketch an outline of social conditions and relationships in eighteenth-century England. Our purpose in doing this is twofold. Firstly it is to demonstrate that the writings of Blake reflect his contemporary social conditions and class structure, and

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1. Preface to The Revolt of Islam, The Complete Poetical Works of P.S. Shelley, (Oxford University Press 1945) p.35.
  2. George Eliot, Felix Holt (Chapter III).



from the evidence thus obtained we shall conclude that Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell and Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell must be studied in the social context of the age. Our second purpose is to show that Heaven and Hell and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell reflect two contrasting philosophies, <sup>types of</sup> /social outlook and <sup>of</sup> /literature. Although Blake and Swedenborg represent two opposing personalities or mentalities they are not individuals isolated from history. Heaven and Hell mirrors the static social system of the time while The Marriage of Heaven and Hell represents a progressive and new society struggling to be freed from self-interest.

Eighteenth-century England inherited and augmented the seventeenth century's traditions and social order against which the Romantic movement was to rebel. 'Wordsworth and Coleridge' says T.S. Eliot 'are not merely demolishing a debased tradition, but revolting against a whole social order;<sup>1</sup>' Blake's reaction against such men as Swedenborg, Locke and Newton was not against them as individuals but rather against the social order which they supported and represented. To fully understand Blake and other Romantic writers we must examine them in their social context. Geoffery Carnall's remarks on Southey can also be applied to Blake:

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1. T.S. Eliot. The use of Poetry and the use of Criticism (London 1952) p.25.

'Southey's development cannot be understood in isolation from the stresses of his time. His beliefs were a response to alarming political and social movements'.

The modern reader should not underestimate the powerful effect of these movements although it is

'tempting to ascribe panic fears and extreme depression to mere morbidity. When Shelley writes, in the Preface to The Revolt of Islam "gloom and misanthropy have become the characteristics of the age in which we live", most of his readers will probably dismiss this as rhetoric, an affectation of romantic melancholy. The same readers may likewise discount the extravagances of Blake, the instability of Coleridge, the posturings of Byron, the bitter misanthropy of Hazlitt, and the feverish outpourings of Keats.' 1.

The eighteenth century was a time of revolution; the political French and American revolutions abroad, and the Industrial Revolution in Britain. 2.

The Romantic poets and radical thinkers in England came under the influence of these political revolutions abroad but the social and political movement did not spring solely from foreign sources. It had social roots at home also. R.W. Harris in his recent book Romanticism and The Social Order 1780-1830 writes: In the period 1780-1830

'Political issues became fundamental with the assertion of radicalism on the one hand, and the defence of conservatism on the other. It was not simply that England came under the influence of foreign revolutionary ideas, but that with the rapid

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1. Geoffrey Carnall. Robert Southey and his Age (Oxford 1960) pp.2-3.
  2. For details see E.J. Hobsbawm, The Age of Revolution (London 1964) pp. 78, 243 and 262-7.



growth of population, urbanisation, trade dislocations and periodic famines, social misery was such as to breed discontent and revolt, while among the governing classes there was a mixture of fear, misgivings and social conscience. There were few writers of the period who were not touched by it, for the seriousness of the problem burnt itself upon the minds of all who thought about it.

On the one hand there was the emergence of radical and socialist thought which, often drawing sustenance from the American and French Revolutions, was primarily a native product.' 1.

The transition from an agricultural society to an industrial society in Britain had begun before the eighteenth century and continued at an ever-accelerating pace, gradual until 1760 but 'critical' between 1760 and 1830. Inventions in textile machinery resulting in the expansion of the cotton industry, development in the iron industry and the improvement in the steam engine led to the age of the machine. Cobbett, in 1830, gives us a glimpse of the resulting industrial England:

'All the way along from Leeds to Sheffield it is coal and iron and coal ... we saw the iron furnaces in all the horrible splendour of their everlasting blaze...' 2.

The industrial revolution was the process which destroyed the common field system of agriculture and which shifted manufacture from the cottage to the factory, and wealth from the countryside to the town. The revolution was, basically, 'no more than a powerful way of drawing ...

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1. R.W. Harris, Romanticism and The Social Order. 1780-1830 (London 1969) pp.9-10.

2. William Cobbett, Rural Rides (Macdonald ed. London 1958) p.398.

industry together.'<sup>1.</sup> At the time of Blake's birth England already had a mercantile economy (exports had already reached £15,000,000 a year, having doubled since the beginning of the century). But industry was based on a scattered 'domestic system.'<sup>2.</sup> Between 1760 and 1830 all small industries were brought together and the great industrial monopolies were created. These changes were indeed revolutionary. But 'This was an industrial revolution'.<sup>3.</sup> The social structure remained unaltered.

In this industrial revolution the old family connections were still important,<sup>4.</sup> and the landowner was still the most influential element in society: 'much of the medieval foundations of society still remained ... Power was still in the hands of the man who possessed land. The merchant and the financier, ...had still ... to operate within the framework of a society that had been shaped by landowner for landowners.'<sup>5.</sup> As Blake wrote in 1769-1778:

'For Commerce, tho' the child of Agriculture,  
Fosters his parent...' <sup>6.</sup>

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1. J. Bronowski, William Blake. A Man Without a Mask (London 1947) p.19.
  2. See for example Dorothy Marshall English People in the Eighteenth Century (London 1962), p.39.
  3. J. Bronowski op. cit., pp.18-9.
  4. Asa Briggs, The Age of Improvement (London 1960) pp.9-20.
  5. Dorothy Marshall, op. cit., p.39.
  6. The page references in all citations from Blake are The Complete Writings of William Blake with all the variant Readings. ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London 1957) p.19.



These landowners held their position only by inheritance, rarely by merit. Upper class education was (very) narrow and inadequate. For these landowners and the new industrialists the eighteenth century was an age of elegance and refinement, of Nash, the Adams brothers, Sheraton, Hepplewhite and Chippendale. But the majority of the people, the poor, lived in misery, for 'the increasing opulence on the one hand was matched by increasing distress on the other.'

<sup>1.</sup> The enclosure of common land and the breakdown of the old system of farming and cottage industry created a rift between farmer and labourer. The labourers

<sup>2.</sup> became 'real slaves' and declined as their masters prospered.

<sup>3.</sup> They flocked to the cities to be swallowed by factories whose owners only wanted cheap labour and where they became 'poorer, hungrier and restless.' Blake writes in his 'Poetical Sketches' (1769-1778):

'The Nobles of the land did feed  
Upon the hungry Poor;  
They tear the poor man's lamb, and drive  
The needy from their door!

"The land is desolate; our wives  
"And children cry for bread; ..."  
The husbandman does leave his plow,  
To wade thro' fields of gore;  
The merchant binds his brows in steel,  
And leaves the trading shore;' <sup>4.</sup>

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1. The Georgians at Home 1714-1830 by Elizabeth Burton, (London 1967), pb. Longmans, p.119.
  2. William Cobbett op. cit., p.219.
  3. E. Burton, op. cit., p.205.
  4. Poetical Sketches (K. pp.11-12).

Trade and industry boomed, while an increase in the price of bread, ~~for example~~, caused by the French wars, brought thousands to starvation level. In every aspect of life there was glaring inequality. The country 'provided more food and clothing and other articles per head of the population' ... but their 'distribution was scandalously unequal.'<sup>1.</sup> The poor were made to 'work incessantly ... to feed and clothe people who do not work at all.'<sup>2.</sup> Blake refers to these people as 'passive.'<sup>latter</sup>

During the last quarter of the century there was increasing concern over the state of the poor but many people in power opposed any attempt to better their position. In 1783 a certain Joseph Townsend remarked that only hunger could induce 'sobriety, diligence and fidelity' in the poor.<sup>3.</sup> Even those who were anxious to improve the miserable conditions usually failed to attack the system that caused it<sup>4.</sup> and merely handed out charity, and that only to those who followed the established religion, 'where the people are not what they deem pious they are not objects of their benevolence...'<sup>5.</sup> and thus they make 'hypocrites'

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1. See, for example, G.M. Trevelyan, English Social History (London 1948) p.348.
  2. William Cobbett, op. cit., p.314.
  3. Asa Briggs, op. cit., p.14.
  4. William Cobbett, op. cit., p.261.
  5. Ibid, p.17.

of the poor. The church in general was more anxious to uphold the established social order than to improve the living standards of its poorer members. Even within the church there was inequality. The 'social gulf between rich and poor clergy was almost as wide as in mediaeval times.'<sup>1.</sup>

In the latter part of the eighteenth century attempts were made to provide education for the poor but the charity schools usually only gave religious instruction and were used as instruments to keep the poor in their place, to make them, as the girls in a Sheffield charity school were taught to sing, 'temperate, chaste, meek and patient ... content and industrious in my station.'<sup>2.</sup> Even then these schools were attacked as threatening the established class structure.<sup>3.</sup> The poor were 'preordained to be ignorant'<sup>4.</sup> and if they received any education, they might rebel against their masters.

During Blake's life Parliament failed to take any effective measure to improve the living conditions of the poor, but passed numerous laws to combat the rising crime rate that resulted from the poverty. The list of offences punishable by death finally 'numbered two hundred.'<sup>5.</sup>

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1. G.M. Trevelyan, op. cit., p.364 and pp.334-335.
  2. E. Burton, op. cit., p.54.
  3. Asa Briggs, op. cit., p.17.
  4. Ibid.
  5. G.M. Trevelyan, op. cit., p.352.



Cobbett notes that Parliament has: 'made it a felony to take an apple off a tree, which last year was a trivial trespass, and was formerly no offence at all' but what 'short of such laws, can prevent starving men from coming to take away the dinners of those who have plenty?'<sup>1.</sup>

Most of the new laws were aimed at safeguarding property.

As Blake judged it, the cause of these crimes was 'the Miser's passion, not the thief's'.<sup>2.</sup>

Stealing forty shillings' worth of goods from a house, five shillings' worth from a shop, or a handkerchief from a person were all capital crimes.<sup>3.</sup>

In 1801 a 13-year-old boy was publicly hanged for breaking into a house and stealing a spoon.<sup>4.</sup>

The law, as a whole, 'was not merely savage, for lack of a police force; it was vicious, because it was irresponsible.' Law 'did not hang for crimes against the body, such as attempted murder. They did not hang for what were thought to be crimes against the spirit, such as witch-craft .... Most of the new hanging crimes were crimes against wealth.'<sup>5.</sup>

1. William Cobbett, p.260.

2. Letter to Dr. Trusler, 23rd August, 1799. (K. p.793).

3. J. Bronowski, op. cit., pp.23-24.

4. E. Burton, op. cit., p.37.

5. J. Bronowski, p.24.

Blake worked in this society and 'experienced' its injustice and intolerance throughout his life. His 'London' poem in the 'Songs of Experience' (1789-1794) is one reaction to the misery and inequality:

'I wander thro' each charter'd street,  
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,  
And mark in every face I meet  
Markes of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,  
In every Infants cry of fear,  
In every voice, in every ban,  
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the Chimney-sweeper's cry  
Every blaspheming Church appalls;  
And the hapless Soldier's sigh  
Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear  
How the youthful Harlot's curse  
Blasts the new-born Infants tear,  
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.<sup>1.</sup>

This poem is a social history of the time. When Blake was born, it was a 'year of dearth' and 'from 1757 throughout Blake's life, the years of dearth grew common. The four-pound loaf had cost 3d. before the dearths, in 1801 it reached the famine price of 1sh.10d.'<sup>2.</sup> Malnutrition was most marked in the cities where rickets, the 'English disease' prevailed and gin was 'the principal sustenance ... of more than 100 thousand people.'<sup>3.</sup> 'Weakness' and 'woe'

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1. Songs of Experience, (K. p.216).

2. J. Bronowski, op. cit., p.18.

3. E. Burton, op. cit., p.214.

were indeed etched on every face. The streets were 'chartered' by laws and social conventions that attempted to stifle and clap manacles on action and original thought.

Eighteenth-century England repeatedly suffered the 'dislocating change from peace to war and war to peace.'<sup>1.</sup> In peace time the military was used by the government 'to prevent a distressed people from committing acts of violence'.<sup>2.</sup> But the soldiers themselves were 'hapless.' They had no barracks but were 'billeted in ale-houses on a population that hated the red-coats and treated them accordingly.'<sup>3.</sup> If they were wounded or discharged they were sent penniless to swell the ranks of the starving unemployed.

Poverty and lack of opportunity drove young girls on to the streets<sup>4.</sup> where they quickly became infected and in turn passed on their 'blight' to others and to their children. These infants were abandoned in the streets by mothers to whom they meant only 'expense and shame'.<sup>5.</sup>

Low wages and social convention forced children of the poor to start work at a very early age.<sup>6.</sup> They were

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1. D. George, England in Transition, (A Pelican Book 1953) p. 53.
  2. William Cobbett, op. cit., p.382.
  3. Trevelyan, op. cit., p.352.
  4. Ibid, p.335.
  5. Ibid, pp.349-350.
  6. D. George, op. cit., p.123.



cheap labour, easily replaceable and thus readily exploited. Blake's chimney sweeper is a typical example of child labourer. He tells his own story in the Songs of Innocence (1789):

'when my mother died I was very young  
And my Father sold me while yet my tongue  
Could scarcely cry "weep! weep! weep!" 1.  
So your chimneys I sweep, & in soot I sleep.'

These chimney-sweepers, who suffered 'the worst fate of all' 2. were usually foundlings or children of parents who could not afford to keep them. Some were ready to 'dispose of their children' ... for 'a glass of gin'. 3. No apprentice fee was expected and the master sweep was even prepared to pay the parents for the services of a child who was thus literally bought and sold. Children were often carried from one master chimney-sweep to the other and disposed of 'to the best bidder.' 4. Foundlings were sold by the Parish. 5. '.... little is known about the poor, ... until well on in the eighteenth century. The poor held no offices, being illiterate they wrote no letters..... They are the anonymous, faceless ones and they made up probably seventy-five per cent of the population.... But about the poor as people, as human beings, we know nearly nothing. They do not, for they could not, tell us themselves what they felt and suffered. Others had

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1. Songs of Innocence. (K. p.117).
  2. D. George, London Life (1925) p.244.
  3. Ibid.
  4. M.D. George, op. cit., p.176.
  5. D. George, op. cit., p.244. For details see J.L.Hammond and B.Hammond, The Town Labourer (1760-1832)(London 1917).

to speak for them - and others began to do so.<sup>1.</sup> Blake was one of the people who spoke on behalf of the poor and his fellow craftsmen.

These conditions were not, of course, exclusive to Britain; the same misery and the gulf between rich and poor existed all over Europe. Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, as we shall see later, reflects the unjust social relationship and conditions that existed at the time. Although the concentration of labour or industrial revolution did not occur in Sweden until as late as 1850, the living conditions of the miners were already very poor and the social structure rigid and inhuman.

The intellectual and philosophical atmosphere of the eighteenth century strengthened the class structure in which everyone had their allotted place. Locke's philosophy of sense principle or 'tabula rasa' and his friend Newton's mechanical laws of nature also governed every aspect of social life. It became fashionable to apply the principles of rational enquiry to all fields of knowledge.<sup>2.</sup> The constitution was regarded as a living application of the Newtonian principles to the art of government, its clockwork mechanism a smaller version of

1. E. Burton, op. cit., p.33.

2. Peter Brown, The Chathamites, (London, 1967) p.422.

the clockwork of the universe as a whole.<sup>1.</sup> Religion, ethics, politics, law and art were all based on nature. The sense of security and satisfaction expressed in Pope's epigram echoed through the century.

'Nature, and Nature's laws lay hid in Night.  
God said, Let Newton be! and All was Light!' 2.

Newton indeed still governed from the grave. In religion it was felt that 'faith must be grounded firmly upon nature before one had recourse to super-nature.'<sup>3.</sup> Social relationships were based on the universal system in which every planet has its fixed and proper place. The clockmaker God has created a balanced universe and given it to us in perfect working order. We must, it was felt, keep the mechanism working perfectly by respecting and practising its laws. The universe came increasingly to be regarded as the 'Great Machine working by rigidly determined laws of material causation.'<sup>4.</sup>

While Newton's mechanical laws of the universe determined the social structure, Locke's philosophy served religion under the name of Deism. Orthodox religion related social events and changes to divine providence or supernatural power and natural religion related them to nature which can be discovered by 'Reason.' All were

1. Asa Briggs, op. cit., p.87.

2. Epitaph Intended for Sir Isaac Newton, The Poems of A.Pope (Edited by John Butt 1963) p.808.

3. Basil Willey, The Eighteenth Century Background, (London 1962) p.11.

4. Ibid, p.11.



equal according to the laws of nature. Everyone had an assigned and fixed position. In other words everyone was born into his predestined position as are the stars. It was the Architect of the Universe who had 'distributed men into different ranks, and at the same time united them into one society, in such sort as men are united.' By Divine Decree the poor were placed under 'the superintendence and patronage of the Rich.' In turn, the rich were charged by 'natural Providence, as much as by revealed appointment, with the care of the poor.'<sup>1</sup> Blake in his poem 'King Edward The Third' (1769-1778) satirizes this mechanical or inhuman system:

'... Our names are written equal  
 In fame's wide trophied hall; 'tis ours to gild  
 The letters, and to make them shine with gold  
 That never tarnishes: whether Third Edward,  
 Or the Prince of Wales, or Montacute, or Mortimer,  
 Or ev'n the least by birth, shall gain the brightest  
 fame,  
 Is in his hand to whom all men are equal.  
 The world of men are like the num'rous stars,  
 That beam and twinkle in the depth of night, 2.  
 Each clad in glory according to his sphere;...'

The mechanical system taught the people to believe that everyman follows his destiny, which is ordained by God; because of that, the poor children had to follow their destiny. The doctrine of predestination meant to make

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1. Joseph Butler, Works, ed. W.E. Gladstone). Vol. II (1896), p.305.
  2. Poetical Sketches (K. p.18).

the poor content and accept their position and be thankful. William Paley in Celebrated Reasons for Contentment (1781) explained why the poor had to be content. While property provided power and implied responsibility, poverty inculcated virtue. 'How thankful, then, the poor should be that the very circumstances in which they are placed have such a powerful tendency to cherish the divine spirit of dependence and subordination.'<sup>1.</sup> The insecurity stemming from this form of dependence and unjust social condition was directly experienced by Blake. He fought against self-interest and abstract moral laws and <sup>the</sup> state religion of the time. He knew that the evil must be fought within society. In his book of Four Zoas (1795-1804), when he would have been glad to find work and salvage 'something less than a life',<sup>2.</sup> he writes:

'It is an easy thing to talk of patience to  
the afflicted,  
To speak the laws of prudence to the houseless  
wanderer,  
To listen to the hungry raven's cry in wintry  
season  
When the red blood is fill'd with wine and with  
the marrow of lambs.'<sup>3.</sup>

The story of Blake was not uncommon and 'it is not even a personal story.'<sup>4.</sup> His poetry and art are directly linked with the social circumstances of his time. The

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1. Asa Briggs, op. cit., p.13.
  2. J. Bronowski, pp.1-9.
  3. The Four Zoas, Night the Second, ll.404-7 (K.p.290).
  4. J. Bronowski, p.1.

difficulty of understanding Blake's art is perhaps the difficulty of understanding this link. 'The difficulty comes,' says D.V. Erdman, 'at least as much from a failure to enter imaginatively into Blake's times as it does from a failure to enter Blake's imagination. Thus an assumption as to 'the sterility' of Blake's environment can lead even an acute observer of Blake to abandon a valuable hypothesis about the irony in his early dramatization of England's commercial warriors.<sup>1.</sup>

Blake used his poetry and art as a means of social criticism which was a product of what T.S. Eliot calls his peculiar honesty. 'It is an honesty against which the whole world conspires, because it is unpleasant. Blake's poetry has the unpleasantness of great poetry.' This peculiar honesty was not exclusive to Blake.<sup>2.</sup> Other Romantics also shared it. 'It is sometimes suggested,' says R.W. Harris, 'that the Romantics were social misfits, weak and vapid in their idealism, beautiful and ineffectual angels, beating in the void their luminous wings in vain.' But this suggestion 'remains both an inaccurate and an uncharitable judgment.'<sup>3.</sup>

1. David V. Erdman, Blake: Prophet Against Empire, (Princeton 1954), pp.4-5.
2. T.S. Eliot, The Sacred Wood, Univ. Paperbacks, ed. 1967, p.161.
3. R.W. Harris, op. cit., p.37.



The growth of discontent in society, and creative vigour and revolutionary spirit in literature, progressed rapidly against the static and rigid social order both in Britain and Europe. In Europe the Pietists, for example, represented one of these social movements. Pietists rejected traditional scholastic theology and the rigid social system. They mainly supported the lower classes of society and propounded that social justice and recognition of human values were the bases upon which true Christianity stood. Pietism and similar movements against the static social systems were widespread and powerful in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>1.</sup>

In Sweden Pietists and Moravians waged war against the established church and her indifference to the unjust social relationship. This injustice was aggravated by the weak state of the economy which had been harmed by the war with Russia (which lasted until the death of Charles XII, 1718) and by a series of crop failures and outbreaks of plague.<sup>2.</sup>

Swedenborg enjoyed some popularity in parts of England which led to the establishment of the so-called 'New Church' (1788) which opposed the orthodox church. But in his own

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1. Koppel S. Pinson, Pietism As A Factor In The Rise of German Nationalism (New York, 1934) pp. 14-16 and p. 27.
  2. Stewart Oakley, The Story of Sweden (London 1966) pp. 111-122.

country, 'where his beliefs never enjoyed much popularity' <sup>1.</sup> ... he identified himself with the established church. His Last Judgement and Heaven and Hell, which we shall discuss later, are in fact an attempt to justify the position of the established social system against its opponents. In the section concerning the 'Spiritual World' he cast out into the desert Quakers and Moravians who preached equality and brotherhood. Swedenborg described the Quakers as 'devoid of understanding' and Moravians as 'seduced by ... flattering speeches.' <sup>2.</sup>

These speeches of the Quakers and Moravians, who supported the lower classes, were based on practical Christianity as opposed to the orthodox theologians who preached abstract religion and were indifferent to social issues. Quakers flourished mainly in England while Pietists and Moravians were more influential in Europe. -/ In 1720, when Swedenborg was thirtyone years of age the Pietists created a great stir in Sweden. Calling themselves 'radical Pietists' they wished to sever ties with the traditional church which bitterly opposed them. <sup>3.</sup> One

1. Ibid., p.180. The teachings of Swedenborg in England led to the establishment of the so-called New Church, which made its greatest impact in northern England. The first meeting of The New Church took place in December 7, 1788. Blake and his wife, apparently as a matter of interest, attended the meeting. See Minutes of the New Church. (London 1885). pp.XIX,XX,19.
2. E. Swedenborg. The Last Judgment, 1758, pp.56-9, nos. 38-7.
3. Robert Murray, see A Brief History of/The Church of Sweden (Stockholm 1961), p.51.

of their leaders was a student called Sven Rosen who had been influenced by Moravian teaching and who founded the Renewed Church of The United Brethren at Herrnhut in 1727. The Moravians, although they did not advocate separation from the established church, attracted the workers and lower classes generally and so were also considered a threat to the established church and state which were united in the face of a common danger. Consequently in 1726 the 'Con-<sup>1.</sup>venticle Edict .... prohibited all .... private worship.'

The Moravians, nevertheless, continued to flourish. They offered some hope to the working poor who were severely oppressed as Sweden struggled to build up her industries. The mine workers suffered worst of all and their unpleasant conditions are reflected in Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell.

A close examination of the teaching of the Moravians and Pietists and their influence on progressive thought throughout Europe will help to explain why they presented such a threat to the traditional structure of church and state. The Moravians believed in an individual's 'deep, emotional personal relationship' with Jesus. They advocated a practical brotherhood under the figurehead of the historical human Jesus.<sup>2.</sup> Thus they would unify the widely separated

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1. Ibid., p. 53.

2. K.S. Pinson, op. cit., p. 25.  
The Moravian Brethren represented the last great outburst of Pietism in the eighteenth century (Ibid., p.22). Pietism may be said to have begun officially with the publication of Spener's Pia Desideria oder Wahren evangelischen Kirche in 1675. Philipp Jakob Spener is perhaps the father of Pietism (Ibid., p.15).



social classes and in doing so raise the position of the poorer people. In his 'Pia Desideria' Spener condemns the traditional churches' emphasis on abstract learning. The church should instead concentrate on practical good works.

Spener's influence spread throughout Germany in the eighteenth century and his ideas are echoed in the writings of Johann Kaspar Lavater, Heinrich Jung-Stilling (1740-1817), Anna Schlatter (1773-1826), and Gottfried Daniel Krummacher (1774-1837). These writers share three general characteristics which united them against the established church. Firstly, they all reacted against the traditional emphasis on dogma and unemotional scholastic arguments on doctrine and instead taught that true Christianity lay in a more inward and enthusiastic form of worship, simpler and more heartfelt. Secondly, true Christianity was, moreover, active and based on a practical life which was regarded as the 'most essential mark of Christian life.'<sup>1.</sup> Thirdly these writers also sought to remove the wide gulf between the official clergy and lay classes. Everyone should be able to read the Bible and the lower classes should be educated to enable them to do so.

Corresponding ideas were current in England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and found expression in the Puritans, Quakerism, the works of William Law, and the Methodism of the Wesleys and George Whitefield.

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1. Ibid., p.14.

Like the European writers they stressed, as Pinson noted: 'individuality, the idea of multiplicity and variety, enthusiastic emotionalism, appeal to the lower classes, and increased interest in their social welfare and education. Even the combination of religious enthusiasm with patriotism is likewise found in England. John Milton and Bunyan parallel Klopstock and Pyra, John Wesley may be placed alongside Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf, and William Cowper and Blake occupy in English Romanticism places similar to those of Hamann, Novalis and the other German Romanticists.<sup>1</sup>

We can thus see that reaction to the established social system and church was widespread in England as well as Europe and can also put the relationship between Swedenborg and Blake into perspective.

Swedenborg linked himself with the established orthodox clergy while Blake, apart from some differences, sympathised with the humanitarian thinkers such as Lavater.

His sympathy with the latter is clearly demonstrated at the end of his 'Annotations':

'I hope no one will call what I have written cavilling because he may think my remarks of small consequences. For I write from the warmth of my heart, & cannot resist the impulse I feel to rectify what I think false in a book I love so much & approve so generally.

Man is bad or good as he unites himself with bad or good spirits: tell me with whom you go & I'll tell you what you do.

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1. Ibid., pp. 27-8.

As we cannot experience pleasure/by means of others <sup>but</sup> ...., who experience either pleasure or pain thro' us, And as all of us on earth are united in thought, for it is impossible to think without images of somewhat on earth. So it is impossible to know God & heavenly things; therefore all who converse in the Spirit, converse with spirits.

For these reasons I say that this Book is written by consultation with Good Spirits, because it is Good, & that the name Lavater is the amulet of those who purify the heart of man.' 1.

In examining the outlook of Blake and Swedenborg, we are dealing with two opposite characters who represent different systems of thought and social background.

Blake believed in the creative mind of every person, and asserted that active life is the true form of Christianity. He paid a great deal of attention to the lower classes, as we can see in such poems as 'The Chimney Sweepers' and 'London', showing concern about their welfare and respecting their energy and gifts.

Blake believed in universal brotherhood and equality and considered this the true Christian philosophy. He agreed with Lavater's ideas as opposed to Swedenborg's rigid class system. Lavater wrote:

'Know, in the first place, that mankind agree in essence as they do in limbs and senses.'

'Mankind differ as much in essence as they do in form, limbs and senses - and only so and not more.'

Blake commented: 'This is true Christian Philosophy far

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1. Annotations to Lavater, (K. p.88). 1969 ed.



above all abstraction.<sup>1.</sup> Blake also applauded Lavater's practical Christianity. Lavater wrote:

'... As the interest of man, so his God - as his God, so he.'

'... The object of your love is your God.'

Blake commented: 'All gold:' and 'this should be written in gold letters on our temples.'<sup>2.</sup> Blake's God is 'Divine Humanity' who is 'Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love' in practical life or society:

'Where Mercy, Love, & Pity dwell  
There God is dwelling too.' 3.

Blake's God is 'the human form divine' as opposed to Swedenborg's passive and punishing God, who is, indeed, Blake's Satan. The conflict between these two characters is the main theme of Blake's writing, and the conflict is the conflict within society. We shall illustrate this in the following chapters while examining Swedenborg's static society as depicted in his Heaven and Hell, and Blake's creative and ever-changing society as depicted in his Marriage of Heaven and Hell.

It is a mistake to view Blake's works either as the product of a mystical experience or of a personal crisis. He did, indeed, experience crises but their root was neither mental nor physical but the result of the social condition and relationship in which he lived. The following quotations

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1. Annotations to Lavater, (K. p.65).
  2. Ibid., pp. 65-6.
  3. Songs of Innocence, (K. p.117.)

from leading Blake scholars might clarify our viewpoint.

Geoffrey Keynes writes about Visions of the Daughters of

Albion: 'The theme of this poem has been related by some writers to crises in Blake's own life, such as his realisation that he was tied legally and morally to a barren wife. But this is pure conjecture, and it is better to regard the book as a poet's view of the evils of organised religion, compulsory morals, oppressed womanhood, and, in addition, of slavery ....' 1.

This view is also true of the other symbolic and prophetic works of Blake, including The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, which was written, as we hope to prove in the following chapters, in opposition to the static, unjust and inhuman social order that Swedenborg represents in his Heaven and Hell. Bronowski remarks:

'Blake speaks the discontent of his time. Until we know the discontent, we do not begin to read his writings; because we do not speak their language.' 2.

The terms of 'Heaven' and 'Hell' and Blake's symbols likewise must be studied within society and its language of discontent.

## 2. Swedenborg's Social Background

In this part our purpose is twofold. Firstly to demonstrate that the terms 'Heaven' and 'Hell' are not religious terms but that they represent two classes in society, that is, the leisured class or the rich and the working class or the poor. Secondly to illustrate how the objects in Swedenborg's environment have coloured his thoughts and have mainly formed his personality. In other words he has applied his creative mind to the objects in

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1. Geoffrey Keynes, William Blake, Poet. Printer. Prophet. (Trianon Press, 1964), p.26.
  2. J. Bronowski, op. cit., p.133.



his own environment. We shall conclude that it is the environment which has mainly formed the personality of Swedenborg.

Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell is a record and product of memories and feelings which he had stored up during the sixty years preceding the writing of the book. It is the interesting outcome of the feelings he had experienced during his dependence on his father until 35 years of age, during his years with the Coal Board and coal mines, and finally during his retirement among church officials in the House of Nobles.

Heaven and Hell is full of symbols, images and emotive words, such as 'gold', 'silver', 'palace', 'castles', 'garments', 'fire', 'clouds', 'darkness', 'smoke', 'coal', 'deep', 'mine', 'valley', 'cliff', 'wilds', 'wilderness', 'beasts', 'rage', 'anger', 'gnashing of teeth', 'caverns' and so on. These symbols and images were derived from the social environment in which he lived and formed his mind. Therefore to understand fully their implication and Blake's ironical reaction to them we must know something of Swedenborg's social background and the circumstances which formed his outlook.<sup>1</sup>

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1. Blake read Swedenborg's writings as they were issued by the Society of Swedenborg in London. He annotated Swedenborg's Wisdom of Angels Concerning Divine Love and Divine Wisdom in 1788, and Providence in 1790. He has annotated Heaven and Hell the second edition, 1784, the Annotations/written about 1790. Blake's copy of Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell 1784, is now in the Houghton Library, Harvard University. For details see The Complete Writings of William Blake. Edited by Geoffrey Keynes. (Oxford University Press 1969) pp.888,927,929.

being/



By the word 'Heaven' Swedenborg means the class of people who possess material wealth, intelligence and wisdom. These people are called Angels. By the word 'Hell' he means the people who work in mines and do manual work or those who do not possess the glory and wealth of the Angels. These people are called Devils.

Blake uses the words in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell in the sense that Swedenborg has introduced in his book of Heaven and Hell. 'Heaven' represents those who live in delight and receive the necessities of life as gratis from the Lord. 'Hell' represents those who depend on their own work or energy.

Swedenborg, unlike Blake, was reared in a very strict religious atmosphere. When he was born in 1689 his father, Jesper Swedberg, was the Swedish court chaplain and an eminent Lutheran bishop. Thus Swedenborg was brought up in a theological atmosphere on the one hand, and amid the luxury of palaces and royal gardens on the other.<sup>1.</sup> His grandfathers on both sides of the family were 'connected with the great mining industry of Sweden'.<sup>2.</sup> To both Swedenborg and his father, living amid material comfort, the spiritual world seemed very real. 'He had an assured faith in the presence of angels among men, and of the helpful offices they fulfil as ministering spirits, sent forth

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1. George Trobridge, Life of Emanuel Swedenborg, (published by Swedenborg Society in London) pp. 10-15.

2. Ibid., p.15.

to minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation'.<sup>1.</sup>

Swedenborg's mother died when he was only eight. He finished university in 1709 and started his travels, going first to England in 1710, returning to Sweden in 1714, having encountered financial difficulties. He could not manage on the grant his father gave him and writes to his brother-in-law (Benzelius) from London:

'I am kept back here on account of 'want of money', I wonder my father does not show greater care for me .... It is hard to live without food or drink like some poor drudge in Sweden.' 2.

Swedenborg was dependent on his father, expected money from him as a right, yet, as his biographer notes, always seemed afraid 'to approach his father with demands' for it.<sup>3.</sup> He hopes his brother-in-law's 'advice and letters will induce my father to be so favourable towards me as to send me the funds which ... will infuse into me new spirit for the prosecution of my studies.'

Again he writes humbly to Benzelius in 1716: 'A single word from you to my father about me will be worth more than twenty thousand remonstrances from me.'<sup>4.</sup> He was ever interested in maintaining his wealth and standard of comfort;

1. Ibid., p. 18.

For information about the Church of Sweden and its development and great influence on the whole affairs of the country while Charles XII was in war with Russia ... and etc. see Robert Murray, A Brief History of the Church of Sweden (Stockholm 1961) pp.46-8 and 110.

2. Ibid., p.28.

3. Ibid., p.36.

4. Ibid., p.24.



however, when he wrote his Heaven and Hell, he rejected the 'body' as evil in favour of 'soul' and the natural world in favour of the spiritual world.

A period of weary waiting and discouragement followed young Swedenborg's return to his native country. Full of the theories and new ideas of Newton and Flamstead he had 'many schemes for his country's good and the enlargement of his own reputation.' But they were all frustrated. At a time when position was more important than ability, his father tried to find Swedenborg employment by using his influence at court, but was unsuccessful until 1716 when Swedenborg was appointed 'Extraordinary Assessor' at the Board of Mines. He later became an 'ordinary assessor' and received payment for his work (1724) but did not receive the full salary until 1730.<sup>1.</sup>

The passive 'life of leisure', ideas and theories now gave way to the 'active' life of coal-mines and miners. Swedenborg at last came face to face with reality. He had to visit mining areas and to play an active part in the duties of the coal board which were many and varied.<sup>2.</sup>

These events help us to understand Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and so appreciate the effect of Blake's irony and moral criticism of him. 'Heaven' and 'Hell' are

1. George Trobridge, op. cit., p.36.

2. Cyril Odhner Sigstedt, The Swedenborg Epic, The Life and Works of Emanuel Swedenborg, (New York 1952) pp. 93-5.



not merely theological terms; they have a social background. It is interesting to see how these real life events have been dressed up in the apparently spiritual and moral terms of Swedenborg. The 'smoke', 'fire', 'cloud', 'valley' and so on, of the coal mines are reflected in Swedenborg's 'Hell', while their condition seemed 'torment' and 'insanity' to the man from the comfortable background of court and church. By studying the reports that Swedenborg had to make on the areas he visited we can follow him 'day by day, driving for miles through interminable forests, .... we can even picture him risking his life in steep descents into gloomy subterranean caverns .... a dangerous feat for one not daily accustomed to such work.'<sup>1.</sup>

Swedenborg's contemporary, Carl Linnaeus, while visiting the great copper mine at Fahlumy was struck by the appalling aspects of the pit. An extract from his account will give a good idea of the kind of sights which met Swedenborg's eyes and, as we see in his 'Hell', left a deep impression on him. (Linnaeus, of course, did not know that Swedenborg would give a theological interpretation to the scene.)

'From this mine arose a continual smoke, and the whole effect of it gave one the idea of the description of hell, which the theologians use to make an impression upon the mind of the man to be saved, is taken from this

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1. C.O. Sigstedt, op. cit., p.96.

or similar pits. Never could any theologian describe a hell more horrible than pits like these.

'From its mouth goes up a poisonous smoke, which poisons the air round about so that one gets there not without pain ... Below the surface are innumerable dark cells, never seen by the sun ... In these cells ... workers go about, doomed to mine work, black as very devils, on all sides surrounded with darkness and soot, smoke and smell ....

'The passages are narrow ... and the roofs drip corrosive ... waters ... what awful anxiety grips one at the lowly portal of this underground kingdom, I know not, or what incredible longing to ascend! There the condemned souls work ... How easy to take a wrong step, and plunge into the bottomless chasm below!'

Linnaeus, however, unlike Swedenborg who condemns the miners' love of work as 'love of the self and the world',<sup>1.</sup> admires the labourers' enthusiasm.

'... however black and horrible it is, there never are lacking ... men with zeal ... seeking work there to win their dearly bought bread.'<sup>2.</sup>

If we turn to Swedenborg's 'Hell' we see the theological and spiritual interpretation he gave to this kind of

1. E. Swedenborg, Heaven and Hell (Manchester 1817: originally published in London in the year 1758) see, for example, pp. 494-500, nos. 568, 570, 572, 573, 576.

2. Sigstedt, op. cit., pp. 96-7.

scene. The mines become 'Hell', and the mine-workers the inhabitants of 'Hell'.

'The apertures or gates to the hells, which are', said Swedenborg, 'beneath the plains and valleys, appear of different aspects ... all are covered, nor are they opened except when evil spirits from the world of spirits are cast in thither; and when they are opened, there is an exhalation thence either like that of fire with smoke ... or like flame without smoke, or like soot, or like a mist and thick cloud; I have heard that the infernal spirits do not see those things, ... because when they are in them they are as in their own atmosphere, and thus in the delight of their life, and this by reason that those things correspond to the evils and falseness in which they are principled ...'

Swedenborg, the priest, the man of means, visits the mines. So:

'It hath also been granted me to look into the hells, and to see what is their quality within, for when it is well-pleasing to the Lord, a spirit and angels who is above, may penetrate by sight into the places beneath ... some hells appear to the view like caverns and dens in rocks tending inwards ... into the deep obliquely ... some hells appear to the view like caves and dens, such as wild beasts inhabit in forests: ... such as are seen in mines ...'<sup>1.</sup>

Thus we can find the sources of all the diabolical

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1. Heaven and Hell, op. cit., nos. 584-586, pp. 508-9.



images both in Heaven and Hell and The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.

Swedenborg became increasingly dissatisfied with his work with the board while his private life was not successful. He seemed to turn more and more away from reality. In 1747 he left his position with the Coal Board although he still retained his salary and, in 1761, took his seat in the House of Nobles. After about ten years rest in 'Heaven' he put down his memories of the past in Heaven and Hell (1757), writing about the horrors and torments of 'Hell', and the delights of 'Heaven.'

In Heaven and Hell there are three parts. 'Heaven,' the world of spirits, and 'Hell'. In 'Heaven' are beings called Angels, who have pleasant homes and garments, and plenty to eat and drink; the spirits are in a state after death, i.e. the middle class or state between 'Heaven' and 'Hell'. In 'Hell' the infernal spirits live. The clothes the Angels wear are more perfect, the food they eat more delicate and their habitations more beautiful than those on earth. This outward magnificence corresponds to their inward wisdom. For example, according to the degree of their intelligence, so the Angels wear different garments. The most intelligent have garments 'glittering from flame and light'. The less intelligent have merely white garments, but the angels of the 'inmost heaven are naked'.<sup>1.</sup>

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1. Ibid., p. 178, no.132.

These garments can be seen and felt in the world because the Angels wear clothes as men in the world do. They change them regularly and receive them 'from the Lord'.<sup>1.</sup> Because every being's garments correspond to his intelligence which is derived from the divine truth, the less fortunate, infernal spirits 'in hells, since they are without truths, indeed appear with garments, but with such as are tattered, dirty and hideous, everyone according to his insanity'.<sup>2.</sup>

People did not believe before Swedenborg's writing that Angels wore clothes; similarly they did not realise there are 'houses and gardens' in the spiritual world as in the natural. The Angels, remarks Swedenborg 'are well aware that such ignorance prevails at this day in the world'.<sup>3.</sup> But again the habitations of Angels are vastly superior to those on earth, and vary according to the dignity of the occupier. When Swedenborg's 'interior sight' was open he was able to wander through these heavenly dwellings in which 'are chambers, inner rooms, and bed-chambers ... there are courts, and round about are gardens'.<sup>4.</sup> Their magnificence exceeds all description

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1. Ibid., p.135, no.181 see 'Garments' pp.131-135.
  2. Ibid., p.135, no.182.
  3. Ibid., p.136, no.183.
  4. Ibid., p.136, no.183.

'being ornamented with such decorations as neither<sup>1.</sup>  
expressions of language ... are able to describe'.

These magnificences are 'presented by the Lord' before  
the angels' eyes; 'nevertheless they delight their minds  
more than their eyes'. In other words, these objects are  
perceived by the five senses first, and then delight the  
Angels' mind. Thus Swedenborg gives an account of his  
natural impressions - the wealth, property and leisure in  
'Heaven' as opposed to the poor and miners in 'Hell'.

Blake later denounces the Angels' 'abyss of the five senses'.<sup>2.</sup>

Swedenborg gives a spiritual interpretation to the  
material wealth in 'Heaven'. In other words he attempts  
to justify the position of wealthy Angels in 'Heaven'.  
He would argue that your external situation represents your  
internal condition. Those in 'Hell' cannot have beautiful  
houses and gardens because their interiors are closed and  
blackened. Angels, however, are accommodated according  
to their wisdom which corresponds 'to the good and truths<sup>3.</sup>  
appertaining to them from the Lord'. The highest Angels  
dwell in mountains, the Angels in the lower spiritual king-  
doms dwell in less elevated places. But again even these  
last are superior to the human situation. They are more

1. Ibid., p.138, no. 185.

2. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (K. p.150).

3. Ibid.,



perfect 'because in a more perfect state: for as angelic wisdom exceeds human wisdom ... so .. do all things which are perceived by them ... ' <sup>1.</sup>

Their houses are 'given to them 'gratis' by the Lord, .. 'according to their reception of good and truth ...' and they are gifted with whatsoever things they have need of'. <sup>2.</sup>

Thus those in 'Heaven' receive their possessions free by reason of their moral superiority. But those in 'Hell', who have to work for whatever they want, are condemned because their possessions spring from the 'infernal love of self and the world', 'the things done by the man himself, and the things done from the man himself are all in themselves evil'. <sup>3.</sup>

To a man like Blake such a degraded idea of human 'energy' and work must have appeared to dishonour the human 'genius' which is love and desire to make and create. Only in this context can we fully appreciate the honesty of Blake's irony. In Swedenborg's *Angelic society* the Devil seems to be more honest than the *Angel*, so Blake's 'Devil' must be in good company.

Swedenborg's passive upbringing made him despise the work of the common people. The active work which is

1. Ibid., p.132, no.177.

2. Ibid., p.141, no.190.

3. Ibid., p.410, no.484.

welcomed as a means of earning a livelihood by the coal miners, seems 'torment'<sup>1.</sup> and 'insanity'<sup>2.</sup> to him. When the hells, or mines, are opened 'there is seen as it were a fiery appearance which smokes, such as is usually seen in buildings on fire' ... When the hells are closed there is a 'dark mass of condensed smoke', but the heat still remains as if 'from the burnt ruins after a fire' or from a 'heated furnace'. This heat excites in the beings in the hells 'lusts ... hatred and revenge ... and insanities.'<sup>3.</sup>

All this means that Swedenborg's personality is mainly formed by the wealthy environment and passive religious upbringing. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Bible, which praises work and rewards people according to their earthly duties has a different meaning for Blake than for Swedenborg.

### 3. Blake's Social Background

Blake's life was much simpler and his background quite different from Swedenborg's. At fourteen, Blake had chosen to be an engraver; and he held to that choice until he died. He had not chosen to be a poet and a painter partly because he could not afford<sup>to</sup> and partly because he did not separate literature from practical life. His art

1. Ibid., p. 497, no. 572 and no. 574, no. 581.

2. Ibid., p. 497, no. 571.

3. Ibid., p. 497, no. 571.

and poetry are linked with his social life. His heaven was always at hand. He believed that 'Heaven and Hell are born together'.<sup>1.</sup> He worked daily and depended on his own 'energy.'

His apprenticeship had ended when he was twentyone years of age and he had made a successful marriage in 1782 when believing, as he later said, that 'Domestic Happiness' is the 'Source of Sublime Art'.<sup>2.</sup> He was twenty-five years old. He did not look to his father for his keep, but earned his living by engraving. After his father's death in 1784, Blake opened a printshop with a fellow engraver and took his brother Robert with him.<sup>3.</sup> Meanwhile, self-taught, he was reading widely, including the works of Swedenborg.

He soon became conscious of Swedenborg's philosophy of predestination or his implied rigid class division. This philosophy naturally suited Swedenborg's social position. But Blake was a common man — an engraver. He worked among his fellow Englishmen, loving them in his heart and feeling at one with them. The Songs of Innocence are an expression of this sympathy.

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1. Annotations To Swedenborg's Divine Love, (K.ed. p.96)
  2. Letter to George Cumberland 23 December 1796  
(K. p. 791)
  3. Alexander Gilchrist, Life of William Blake (London 1942)  
pp. 37-47.



'Can I see another's woe  
And not be in sorrow too?'

Swedenborg looked on the mine workers as beings from a different existence. Blake, who also worked with his hands, would see them merely as fellow workers, and expresses a true Christian attitude in his fellow-feeling. Blake delighted in honest toil and its natural rewards - as opposed to the materialism and cunning which he obliquely censures in the proverb:

'All wholesome food is caught without a net or a trap'. 'Proverbs of Hell' (K. p.151).

'The question about Blake the man' said T.S. Eliot, 'is the question of the circumstances that concurred to permit ... honesty in his work ... The favouring conditions probably include these two: that, being early apprenticed to a manual occupation, he was not compelled to acquire any other education in literature than he wanted, or to acquire it for any other reason than that he wanted it; and that, being a humble engraver, he had no journalistic-social career open to him. There was, that is to say, nothing to distract him from his interests or to corrupt these interests: neither the ambitions of parents or wife, nor the standards of society, nor the temptations of success ....'<sup>1.</sup>

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1. T.S. Eliot, Selected Essays. (London 1932) pp. 317-8.

Blake had learned that he who depends on his own  
 'energy' of body or mind does not dwell on unhappiness for  
 'The busy bee has no time for sorrow'.<sup>1.</sup>

This study of the eighteenth century background and  
 social environment or upbringing of Swedenborg and Blake  
 might help us to understand and appreciate the effect of  
 the irony and moral value of The Marriage of Heaven and  
Hell against Heaven and Hell.

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1. 'Proverbs of Hell' (K. p. 151).

## CHAPTER II

THE MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND HELL.1. 'The Argument' and 'Rintrah'.

Our purpose in this part is twofold. Firstly, to demonstrate that 'The Argument' in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell refers to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell. Secondly, that the character of Rintrah in 'The Argument' represents the selfish or false prophet who is punishing the 'just' man in himself and people in 'Hell'. 'The Argument' is not fully understood<sup>1.</sup> and we believe that the interpretation of 'The Argument' and of 'Rintrah' is a matter of considerable social and literary importance.

The term 'Rintrah' is used by Blake in both his early and later writings, first appearing in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (etched about 1790-93). Both David V. Erdman and N.K. Nurmi for example have tended to dismiss the possibility of identification, while Middleton Murry implies that 'Rintrah' represents the 'anger of Revolution',<sup>2.</sup> which also exists in Blake's heart.

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1. Harold Bloom's article on 'Dialectic In The Marriage' published in English Romantic, edited by M.H.Abrams. (Oxford Univ.Press 1960) p.76. *Poets; Modern Essays in Criticism*
  2. See, for instance, D.V.Erdman, Prophet Against Empire (Princeton,1954), p.174; N.K.Nurmi, Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell (Ohio,1957), 29; J.M.Murry, William Blake (London,1933), 61; Erdman (p.185) identifies Rintrah with William Pitt. For details about Erdman see Appendix I.



The character of Rintrah depends on the context in which he appears. In Milton Rintrah is prophetic, but in Europe and the Song of Los he has a Urizenic character. Blake identifies Rintrah, as with his other characters, according to his position and social relationship with other people. In other words Blake's characters are not abstract names. But they are human and social beings who are recognized *in* the course of their social and human responsibility or active life. It is not thus helpful to interpret the Rintrah of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell in the light of the information from later writings, because we cannot be sure to which character of Rintrah in the later works of Blake the Rintrah of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell corresponds. We must therefore examine the origin of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, or at least that of 'The Argument', and consider Rintrah's social and human relationship with people or his children and also consider the derivation of the word. From the evidence thus obtained, we shall conclude that in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell Rintrah seems to have the Urizenic rather than prophetic character.

It is generally accepted among Blake scholars that The Marriage of Heaven and Hell <sup>is</sup> written in criticism of Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, although the crucial point has been missed by their relating 'The Argument' to the French counter-revolution and the wars against France, or

it has received a general interpretation.<sup>1.</sup>

In The Marriage of Heaven and Hell Blake criticizes the rigid class division implied by Swedenborg's doctrine of predestination.<sup>2.</sup> 'The Argument' is a concise statement of Blake's opposition to Swedenborg's false prophecy.

Swedenborg's father, as we have pointed out, was a leading cleric, and Swedenborg himself inherited large mining estates through his mother.<sup>3.</sup> In Heaven and Hell<sup>4.</sup> he places the people who work in the mines and those who oppose him in his 'Hell', and the church officials, nobles and himself in 'Heaven'. Those who live in 'Heaven' are called angels. The hells are ruled by a 'general influx of divine good and divine truth from the heavens'.<sup>5.</sup> There are special angels whose duty is 'to restrain the insanities and disturbances which abound' in 'Hell'. These angels rule through fear. In some inhabitants of 'Hell', fear is 'implanted and ingrafted', but it must be supported by

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1. Erdman, op. cit., pp.161-2. For details see Appendix I. See also Nurmi op. cit., pp.26-7; and pp.28-9. For details see Appendix II.

2. See for instance E. Swedenborg Heaven and Hell (Manchester 1817) p.353, no.427, and Blake's Annotations to Swedenborg's ... Divine Providence pp.131-133. (K. pp.131-33).

3. See C.O.Sigstedt, The Swedenborg Epic. The Life and Works of Emanuel Swedenborg (New York,1952), p.81. See also, for example, J.Bronowski, op. cit., p.62 and p.86.

4. About Swedenborg's writings see, Bibliographical Index of Swedenborg's Writings (London, The Swedenborg Society, 1897).

5. H.H., p.471, no.543.

punishments which 'in hell are manifold'.<sup>1.</sup> And the resulting fear of punishment is 'the only medium to restrain the violence and fury of those who are in the hells; there is no other'.<sup>2.</sup> Thus Swedenborg restrains and punishes those who violate his 'granted' divine authority.

Many passages depict Swedenborg, who set himself up as a divinely inspired prophet, walking amid fire and torment. He considers himself a righteous being, and his opponents evil or devils. The evil ones in 'Hell' are suffering punishment. He exposes their weaknesses and sins, and depicts himself as a proud avenging warrior from 'Heaven'. Rintrah is apparently this character of Swedenborg. Blake, after reading Heaven and Hell, identifies Swedenborg's prophecy, with Urizen or Rintrah.

'Rintrah roars & shakes his fires in the burden'd air;  
Hungry clouds swag on the deep'.<sup>3.</sup>

Here Rintrah is Satan or a fallen hero. The 'burden'd air' is the burden of self-interest and self-will. Swedenborg supports his case against those in 'Hell' by using arguments and exhortations derived from the Bible and the teaching of Jesus and the Old Testament prophets such as

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1. Ibid., p.471, no.543.
  2. Ibid.
  3. Heaven and Hell, p.509, no.586.



1.

Isaiah and Ezekiel and what Swedenborg calls the Ancients. For example, from his privileged position amid the plenty of 'Heaven' he instructs the less fortunate to 'resist the loves of self and of the world' using the words of Jesus:

'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' 2.

Defending the moral and human values of Jesus against the self-interest of those in 'Heaven', Blake puts forward the argument of those in 'Hell'. From their viewpoint, 'The Argument' is that there did not exist such 'Heaven' and 'Hell' or rigid class division until idle people like Swedenborg created them by their passive living and self-interest.

'Once meek, and in a perilous path,  
The just man kept his course along ....  
Till the villain left the paths of ease,  
To walk in perilous paths, and drive the  
Just man into barren climes.' 3.

The established 'Heaven' and 'Hell' or 'Good' and 'Evil' did not exist until a villain (a passive character or personality) left his passive life (passive upbringing)

1. See for instance p.65, no.87; p.85, no.115; p.91, no. 119; p.128, no.171; p.188, no.256; p.189, no.258.
2. Matth. XI,29,30. (The emphasis is mine, indicating the words which are used by Blake in 'The Argument'.)
3. 'The Argument', (K. p.148).

to face active life (i.e. Swedenborg's close contact with the life of the miners). Swedenborg's experience could be described in Blake's terms as a change from 'paths of ease' to 'perilous paths' or from passive life to active life.

The terms 'Heaven' and 'Hell' or 'Good' and 'Evil' do not have moral value. They are conventional laws which are created by the passive in 'Heaven' to oppose the just or active people in 'Hell'. What, for example, Swedenborg calls 'Good' is to Blake morally 'Evil'. Passivity is error or 'Evil'. For passivity is based on selfhood. It is selfhood which drives the 'just man' into 'barren climes'. In other words 'Hell' or 'Evil' is within society and is created by the self-interest of Angels in 'Heaven'. 'Error is Created. Truth is Eternal.'<sup>1</sup> If we take, as Swedenborg has described, 'Heaven' as a good condition of living or Wealth and 'Hell' as a bad condition of living or the <sup>POVERTY</sup> peer then to Blake bad condition and poverty or 'Hell' is created by those who live passively or without working:

'Pity would be no more  
If we did not make somebody Poor;  
And Mercy no more could be  
If all were as happy as we.' 2.

Swedenborg, reading the Bible with the angels in

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1. A Vision of The Last Judgment (K. p.617).
  2. Songs of Experience (K. p.217).



'Heaven' saw it as a kind of spiritual handbook. Blake, reading it with the working people in 'Hell' regarded it as a living story. The ancient prophets whom Blake mentions in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell were, to him, full of human feeling, of hope and inspiration; they praised the people's work and creative energy.

'Roses are planted where thorns grow,  
And on the barren heath  
Sing the honey bees.  
Then the perilous path was planted,  
And a river and spring  
On every cliff and tomb,  
And on the bleached bones  
Red clay brought forth'. 1.

This is the way that Blake in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (he ironically calls himself a Devil as opposed to the Swedenborgian Angel) teaches the Angel how to read the Bible and says: 'The worship of God is: Honouring his gifts in other men, each according to his genius, and loving the greatest men best; those who envy or calumniate great men hate God; for there is no other God'.<sup>2.</sup> Here the Devil tells the Angel that having a respect for the creative energy in man is the true worship of God rather than abstract ceremonies. For, as Blake states in his Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love, 'the whole of the New Church is in the Active Life and not in ceremonies at all'.<sup>3.</sup>

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1. Ibid.

2. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (K. p.158).

3. Annotations To Swedenborg's Divine Love (K. p.92).



Psychologically, Swedenborg is similar to Tiriel and Thel,<sup>1.</sup> who refuse the self-sacrificing aspects of experience and flee back to their own natural memories of their own easy background or selfhood.

The hard active life of the people (in the mines) seemed a 'torment' and 'insanity' to him. Swedenborg,<sup>2.</sup> who set himself up as a prophet, now turns into a selfish priest who moves like a 'sneaking serpent', which, perhaps, means to be bound to the earth or his selfhood, while punishing transgressors for their love of the self and of the world in 'mild humility'.

'Now the sneaking serpent walks  
In mild humility' <sup>3.</sup>

He accuses those who apparently live in a love of the world of being in 'Hell', while he himself lives in 'Heaven' and its 'paradisiacal scenes which exceed all idea of the imagination'.<sup>4.</sup> Those in 'Hell' who delight in honest toil and its natural rewards rather than the excess of things in Swedenborg's 'Heaven', live under punishment and are driven into the 'wilds':

'And the just man rages in the wilds where lions roam'.<sup>5.</sup>

1. See for instance Tiriel (K. pp.100-102) and The Book of Thel (K. pp.129-30), and see also J. Bronowski, op. cit., pp. 40-2.
2. A Treatise Concerning the Last Judgment, (London 1810: originally published in London in the year 1758), p.67.
3. M.H.H. (K. p.149).
4. Heaven and Hell, p.339, no.412.
5. Ibid., (K. p.149).

Thus the prophet who is supposed to work and be a shepherd for his flock and a lover of the people has become a wicked priest by turning against the 'just man' in pernicious fury. The 'just man' represents the active or creative personality as opposed to the 'villain' or passive personality. The condition of hopelessness is regenerated and Swedenborg, who had rebelled against priestcraft and materialism, has become the priest instead.<sup>1.</sup> The voice of the just character who is suffering the punishment of the passive personality or the 'reasoning power' is still heard in Rintrah or Swedenborg:

'Rintrah roars & shakes his fires in the burden'd air:  
Hungry clouds swag on the deep.'

Thus 'The Argument' starts and ends with the Urizenic character of Rintrah. The revolutionary prophet has fallen into his selfhood and the cycle of error is repeated again.

The derivation of the word 'Rintrah' is another problem which confronts Blake scholars. The origin of the word has not apparently yet been suggested. It is, however, probably derived from the word 'Indra', the God of thunder in Hindu mythology. The name of 'Indra' seems first to have made its appearance in a western work in Sir William Jones' translation of Sakuntala or The Fatal Ring, an Indian drama by Calidas. This was first published in 1789

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1. See, for example, Stewart Oakley, The Story of Sweden (London 1966), p.180.



and was widely read in Britain.<sup>1.</sup> Blake perhaps read the second or third edition (1790 and 1792). The word 'Rintrah' is probably the combination of 'Reason' (dynamic personality or mind peculiar to the just man) and 'Indra' (the limited and static reason peculiar to Urizen: your reason).<sup>2.</sup> The 'ah' at the end of 'Rintrah' is an English transliteration of the vowel sound 'a' as in 'Jehovah'. By this combination, thus, Rintrah serves as a twofold character: one is the prophetic character: 'but Rintrah who is of the reprobate',<sup>3.</sup> and another the Urizenic character: 'O Rintrah, furious King!'<sup>4.</sup> All this means that Rintrah, as a human character, is a twofold being: 'Man is a twofold being, one part capable of evil and the other capable of good'.<sup>5.</sup> Evil is passive and good is active, and 'Man is bad or good as he unites himself with bad or good spirits'.<sup>6.</sup>

1. The translation of Sakuntala was first published in Calcutta in 1789. Second and third editions were published in the years 1790 and 1792 in London. The fourth edition was published in Edinburgh in 1796.
2. About 'Indra' see Jones, Sakuntala (London, 1790), Act VII. pp.137-155.
3. Milton, p.34 (K. p.488).
4. Europe, plate 8, l.13. (K. p.240).
5. Annotations to Lavater (K. p.80).
6. Annotations to Lavater (K. p.88).



There are two pieces of evidence which might support our assumption of the Indian origin of the word 'Rintrah'. One is the date (1790-92) of the publication of Sakuntala which coincides with the date of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (1790-93). The second piece of evidence is the appearance of 'Rintrah', 'Brama' and 'East' together in The Song of Los (1795): 'When Rintrah gave Abstract Philosophy to Brama in the East'.<sup>1.</sup> Rintrah, here, is the Urizenic character or the false prophet and Brama represents priestcraft. It is Rintrah in this same Urizenic form who appears at the outset of 'The Argument' in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.

## 2. Swedenborg's Last Judgment

Plate 3 of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell:

'As a new heaven is begun, and it is now thirty-three years since its advent, the Eternal Hell revives. And lo! Swedenborg is the Angel sitting at the tomb: his writings are the linen clothes folded up .....'<sup>2.</sup>

This passage refers to Swedenborg's last judgment or prophecy. In his book of The Last Judgment Swedenborg

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1. I would suggest that this line refers to the collaboration between the British government of the time (Rintrah) with the priest class (Brama) in India. The 'Abstract Philosophy' suggests the mechanical philosophy of Locke and Newton which was a reflection of the Eighteenth century Urizenic system similar to that of Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell.

'..... a Philosophy of the Five Senses was complete. Urizen wept and gave it into the hands of Newton and Locke'. The Song of Los. Keynes pp.243-4.

2. M.H.H. (K. p.149.



states that he has been 'granted' divine authority:

'.... it was granted me to see with my eyes, that the last judgment is now accomplished, and that the evil are cast into the hells, and the good elevated into heaven, and thus that all things are reduced to order, and thereby the spiritual equilibrium restored, which subsists between good and evil, or between heaven and hell.

..... This last judgment commenced in the beginning of the preceeding year 1757, and was fully accomplished at the end of the same year.' 1.

Swedenborg rejected the orthodox view that the last judgment will take place in the next world. The man of the church 'should from ignorance continue in such faith, ..... concerning the last judgment. .... The belief of what is said about it in the literal sense of the Word  
2.  
.....' He also repudiated the views of radical and social thinkers that the last judgment must occur on earth. But Swedenborg's last judgment is only based on his own limited background and memories which he puts against the rest of society. While sitting in 'Heaven' and dividing himself from the people he declared his prophecy that 'the last judgment is accomplished, and that the evil are cast into the hells ....' He is in 'Heaven' but his children suffer in 'Hell'. In other words 'Hell' still exists while Swedenborg announces his last judgment.

In Plate 3 of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell Blake satirizes Swedenborg's prophecy which is limited and based on selfhood - dividing society into 'Heaven' and 'Hell':

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1. E. Swedenborg. A Treatise Concerning The Last Judgment. op. cit., p.67, no. 45.
  2. Ibid., p.66, no. 45. See also pp.1-28.



'As a new heaven is begun, ... it is now thirty-three years  
..... The Eternal Hell revives.'

The 'new heaven' is the last judgment of Swedenborg which, as we have noted, began in 1757. Blake was also born in this year. Thirty-three years after Swedenborg's last judgment Blake wrote The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is undated but the date is deduced (1790) by the addition of 33 years on to 1757. Swedenborg had ascended to 'Heaven' but 'eternal Hell' was still active both in society and in the mind of Swedenborg. The people in 'Hell' were still living under punishment and torment. The word 'Eternal' is an ironical criticism of Swedenborg's rigid class system and philosophy of predestination in which men are 'enrolled' in 'Heaven' or 'Hell' after 'Departure from the World'. In other words those in 'Heaven' and 'Hell' are assigned to their places by 'Divine Providence':

'But the Man who doth not suffer himself  
led/ To be/to, and enrolled in Heaven, is prepared  
for his Place in Hell; ..... This  
is the INTIMUM of the Divine Providence  
concerning Hell'. 1.

Blake wrote underneath the passage: 'What is Enrolling  
but Predestination? ...' <sup>2.</sup> In another passage Swedenborg said:

'Since every Man ..... lives after Death to  
Eternity, and according to his Life here hath  
his Place assigned to him either in Heaven or in

- 
1. Annotations to Swedenborg's ... Divine Providence.  
(K. p. 131)
  2. Ibid., p.132.



Hell, ..... it follows, that the human Race throughout the whole World is under the Auspices of the Lord, and that everyone, from his Infancy even to the End of his Life, is led of Him in the most minute Particular, and his Place forseen, and at the same Time provided'. 1.

All this means that according to Swedenborg the social position of those in 'Heaven' and 'Hell' are predestined and thus the social system or relationship is fixed and established. Blake while scoring the phrases 'Place forseen' and 'Time provided' wrote underneath the passage:  
 2.  
 'Devil & Angels are Predestinated'. ('Devil' represents those who are in 'Hell' and 'Angels' represent those, like Swedenborg, who are in 'Heaven'.) Thus the 'law', 'order' and 'equilibrium', which Swedenborg writes of in his Last Judgment, are based on a rigid and inhuman class relationship.

The irony of 'Eternal Hell' in Plate 3 of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is, perhaps, also relevant to the economic condition of England at the time. In 1757 when Swedenborg set himself up as an appointed prophet it 'was a year of dearth' in England. 'So scarce was corn that parliament forbade its use in the making of spirits [and] .... from 1757, throughout Blake's life, the years of dearth  
 3.  
 grew common.' And when Blake was writing The Marriage

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1. Ibid.,
  2. Ibid., p.132.
  3. J.Bronowski, op. cit., p. 18.

of Heaven and Hell the 'Eternal Hell' was still 'reviving'. In other words it was, as we have seen in the first chapter, still a 'year of dearth'. The economic condition of Sweden, due to her engagement in war and crop failure in 1771<sup>1</sup>, was perhaps worse. But the prophet Swedenborg, instead of being a shepherd to his wretched flock, has become priestlike fleeing back to his own passive memories while writing about 'numbers', 'weight' and 'measure' of things and place in the church or 'Heaven'. Blake commenting on this writes in Proverbs of Hell: 'Bring out number, weight and measure in a year of dearth.'

Blake repudiates Swedenborg's false prophecy, which is based on his own limited natural impressions. These impressions form his 'Heaven' as opposed to 'Hell'. His last judgment is based essentially on the passive rationalism which divides passive life against active life or 'Heaven' from 'Hell'. Since his knowledge of 'Heaven' and 'Hell' as last judgment is based on the impressions formed by his limited upbringing and the passive sense principle, therefore 'his writings are the linen<sup>n</sup> clothes folded up.' The 'linen clothes' represent the passive memories in which the creative personality or mind is wrapped up. The passive rationalist, at his last judgment, sees the passive memories or linen clothes rather than the creative personality. Swedenborg in Heaven and Hell has

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1. Stewart Oakley, pp. 111-118.



collected only his passive memories or 'linen clothes'.

The reference to 'linen clothes' in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell apparently satirises Swedenborg's passive impressions of his background. Swedenborg explains and describes his impressions of all things which belong to those who are in 'Heaven'. Those in 'Heaven' are distinguished by special clothes and garments. In his chapter 'Concerning the Garments with which the Angels appear Clothed' he discusses the different kinds of clothes in which Angels appear:

'The garments with which the angels are clothed, like all other things, .....correspond to their intelligence; .....all in the heavens appear clothed according to their intelligence; .....' 1.

In other words Swedenborg believed that the external or natural existence or appearance of man reflects his inner quality. Since the intelligence of the Angels is derived from the divine source or the Lord and the garments of the Angels correspond to their intelligence, it follows that the garments of Angels are in fact the 'transfiguration'<sup>2</sup> of the Lord.

In support of his belief Swedenborg quotes from the Bible, stating how the angels appeared to the prophets and Jesus:

'Inasmuch as the angels are clothed with garments in heaven, they have ....also appeared clothed with garments when they have been seen in the world, as when they were seen by the prophets, and likewise

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1. Ibid., p.132, no.178.  
2. Ibid., p.134, no.180.



at the Lord's sepulchre;' on which latter occasion it is said that 'Their appearance was like lightning', and 'their raiment glittering and white', Matt. xxviii. 3; Mark XVI.5; Luke XXii. 4; John XX. 12,13; and they who were seen in heaven by John had 'gar-<sup>1.</sup>ments of fine linen and white', Rev. IV.4; chap.xix.11,13.' The garments signify truths and intelligence or that the Angels' external appearance correspond to their internal qualities.

This idea is apparently derived from the impressions Swedenborg formed during his upbringing in a clerical environment. Since the Church and its officials belong to the 'Heaven' or The Lord, therefore whatever they have is from the Lord: Angels

'are clothed with various garments hath been seen by me a thousand times: I have enquired whence they had them, and they have told me that they had them from the Lord, and that they are given to them, and that they are occasionally clothed without knowing .....' 2.

Swedenborg, thus, explains his impressions of the garments and clothes of church officials as his prophetic writing or last judgment, which Blake satirizes in the Plate 3 as 'the linen clothes folded up' or as the collection of impressions formed by Swedenborg's social environment.

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p.135, no.181.

The 'linen clothes' also correspond to the 'Female Garment', as we shall see later in The Gates of Paradise. The creative or prophetic mind is hidden in the 'female garment' or materialism.

The symbol of 'linen clothes' is essentially derived from the Bible. Jesus after rising leaves his 'linen clothes' behind.

'...The linen clothes lying; yet went he not .....  
the linen clothes lie.' (St. John, Chapter XX,  
verses 4-7).

Jesus as a creative personality leaves the 'linen clothes' or the natural memories behind and rises with the 'Immortal Man' whereas the priest leaves the 'Saviour' or creative personality behind and instead collects his 'linen clothes' or his limited natural memories.

Swedenborg thus escapes from reality and his experience. He is now 'sitting at the tomb' or at the 'Grave' of his natural memories describing 'the linen clothes' or the impressions which are formed by his limited background and upbringing. In other words Swedenborg's weak part has taken over his true part or Man. He, like Tiriel and Thel, returns to his passive memories which, as we shall see in The Gate of Paradise, are doors to the Paradise of the 'Weary Man':

'Now is the dominion of Edom, <sup>&</sup> ~~and~~ the return of Adam into Paradise; see Isaiah XXXIV and XXV, Chap. ...' 1.

Edom represents the false prophecy. The 'return of Adam

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1. M.H.H. plate 3 (K. p.149).

into Paradise' suggests the return of Swedenborg as the false prophet or the priest into his paradisiacal memories instead of returning to the earth or reality and active life. The passive memories represent materialism or selfhood.

Isaiah XXXIV and XXXV apparently convey two contrary ways or paths. One path leads to 'Death's Door' or 'Nature's wide womb', inside which are 'unquenchable burnings' - 'A void immense, wild, dark & deep, ....'<sup>1.</sup>

Isaiah XXXIV represents the place to which the false prophet or Urizenic character returns (after his last judgment). We hear the voice of false prophet or Urizenic character in Isaiah XXXIV:

'.....my sword shall be based in  
heaven: behold, it shall come down upon  
.... the people of my Curse, to judgment.  
The sword of the Lord is filled with blood,  
it is made fat with fatness, and with  
the blood of lambs and goats ....'

In the dominion of the false prophet and his punisher God

'the streams .... shall be turned into pitch  
.... and the land ... shall become burning  
pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor  
day'.

The 'burning pitch' in Isaiah XXXIV corresponds to the 'unquenchable burnings' in the wide womb of Urizen.

Isaiah XXXV represents the other contrary path or way which leads to Zion or the land of Innocence. Zion corresponds to Edom. Zion, the contrary

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1. The First Book of Urizen Chap.II,plate 4 (K.p.224).



to Edom, is the dominion of true prophecy. Chapter XXXV starts like the first part, after <sup>the</sup>/Rintrah lines in 'The Argument':

'The wilderness and the solitary place  
shall be glad for them; and the desert  
shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.'

Here the society, contrary to one which we have seen in the beginning of this chapter, is not divided into 'Heaven' and 'Hell' by <sup>a</sup>/passive personality:

'No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous  
beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be  
found there; but the redeemed shall walk  
there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall  
return, and come to Zion with songs  
and everlasting joy upon their heads:  
they shall obtain joy and gladness, and  
sorrow and sighing shall flee away' (Verses 8-10).

Blake's purpose in putting chapters XXXIV and XXXV together is, in fact, to show the two contrary states of the human soul after the last judgment, and everybody reads the Bible according to his state of mind or soul which is mainly formed by social circumstances. Some, like Swedenborg, arrive at a sort of innocence which is based on his passive social background. Tiriel is an example of this innocence: 'He is an innocent old man & hungry with his travel'.<sup>1.</sup> The priest or false prophet also has this mentality and the priest and his God in the Songs of Experience represent this character. In Plate 3 it is this character of Swedenborg who has not yet freed himself

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1. Tiriel, l. 33 (K. p.101).

from his selfhood. After thirtythree years the 'Eternal Hell' revives. In other words the 'last judgment' which means freedom of man from the slavery of materialism and self-interest has not yet been fulfilled in Swedenborg. He is still divided both in mind or soul and nature or society. Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell reflects this division.

Some people, on the contrary like Lavater and Blake, reach a different sort of innocence. Lavater's Aphorisms on Man or Blake's Songs of Innocence are products of this sort of innocence where, contrary to The Songs of Experience, there is no gulf or rigid division between the father and his children. The father has not divided his self-interest against his children. There is unity both in body and soul or nature and mind. It is the society of 'Peace' and 'Love':

'For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love  
Is God, our father dear,  
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love  
Is Man, his child and care.' 1.

Here the father, contrary to the father in Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, loves his children. God exists in this state of love and brotherhood:

'Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell  
There God is dwelling too.' 2.

It was the innocence of this Christianity which, among other things, appealed to Lavater and Blake. It was also

1. Songs of Innocence (K. p.117).
2. Ibid.

this aspect of Bible teaching which Blake and other progressive elements advocated against materialism of the Church or against the established and mechanical social systems of the age.

### 3. The Idea of 'Contrary Progression'

The idea of 'contraries' follows Blake's irony about Swedenborg's prophecy in Plate 3 of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell:

'Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate are necessary to Human existence. From these contraries spring what the religious call Good & Evil. Good is the passive that obeys Reason. Evil is the active springing from Energy. Good is Heaven. Evil is Hell.' 1.

The passage seems to be a brief reading of Heaven and Hell and, like 'The Argument', is a concise statement of Blake's opposition against Swedenborg's static system. The statement is based on Blake's philosophy too.

In this part we shall attempt to examine both the word itself and the idea of 'contrary' in Heaven and Hell. From the evidence thus obtained, we shall conclude first that the idea of 'contraries' and 'progression' in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell seem to be directly related to Heaven and Hell - a view somewhat at variance with that put forward by such distinguished Blake scholars as Martin

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1. M.H.H., (K. p. 149).



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K. Nurmi and Miss Kathleen Raine. Secondly that Swedenborg's doctrine of the 'contrary state', unlike that of Blake, is based on 'negation' and his own static memories and that Heaven and Hell is the outcome of this system of thought or passive rationalism.

Swedenborg and Blake have opposing ideas of the meaning of the word 'contrary'. This difference stems from the essential difference in their social background and upbringing. Blake views the 'contrary' states of life and mind as necessary elements for progression or creation. 'Human existence' or imagination is based on these contrary states. We appreciate warmth by the ratio of cold, leisure by the ratio of work or, to put <sup>it</sup> in Swedenborg's terms, 'Heaven' by the ratio of 'Hell'. But Swedenborg regards any thing or state of feeling which is 'contrary' or 'opposite' to 'Heaven' or his static memories as unnecessary or 'evil'. He loves 'Heaven' because his 'driving love' and 'internal state' agrees with what exist there. He rejects and negates 'Hell' and those who live there because he feels his 'driving love' or internal state 'contrary' or opposite to them.

Swedenborg's philosophy is based on rationalism or a static sense principle. His ideas of 'love', 'joy', 'delight', 'truth' and 'good' are derived from his own

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1. Martin K. Nurmi, op. cit., p.28; for details see Appendix II. Kathleen Raine Blake and Tradition (London 1969) vol.1. p.363. For details see Appendix III and IV.

impressions formed by his background and clerical environment. Whatever agrees with his 'driving love' or his memories and views is 'good' and whatever disagrees with them is 'evil':

'..... love is the receptacle of all things of heaven, which are peace, intelligence, wisdom, and happiness: for love receives all and singular the things which are in agreement with itself; it desires them, enquires after them, imbues them as of its own accord, ..... this ..... known to man, .... the love in which he is principled .... draws from the things of his memory all things which are in agreement with it, ..... but all other things, which 1. are not in agreement, it rejects and exterminates'.

In other words man has two opposing principles. One is attracted to and agrees with all things that he loves and the other rejects or disagrees with the things that he does not love. Man's being in 'Heaven' or 'Hell' depends on his internal 'driving love'. The reason that Angels are in 'Heaven', for example, is because they 'have loved what is good and true for the sake of what is good and true, and implanted these principles in their lives ...' 2.

From these opposite principles of 'agreement' and 'disagreement' or 'love' and 'rejection' Swedenborg develops his doctrine of 'contrary states' which are based on 'negation' or a static system. 'Heaven' negates those who are in 'Hell'.

In his system the active life of 'Hell' is 'opposite'

1. H.H., p.16, no.18 (our emphasis).
2. Ibid., p.17, no. 18.

or 'contrary' to 'Heaven'. The people in 'Hell' love the self and the world, but those in 'Heaven' love the Lord. Since all love, truth, wisdom, intelligence, delight stem from the Lord and He is the Lord of 'Heaven' and the angels, therefore the people in 'Hell' are 'contrary' to divine love, 'truth', 'wisdom', 'intelligence' and heavenly 'delight'. In other words those in 'Hell' who are not similar in thought and appearance to those in 'Heaven' are in<sup>an</sup> opposite or 'contrary' state to 'divine order':

'As all things which are according to divine order correspond to heaven, so all things which are contrary to divine order correspond to hell.' 1.

Swedenborg explains that light and heat in 'Heaven' are different to the light and heat in 'Hell'. The light of 'Heaven' is divine truth, divine wisdom and intelligence. In the light of 'Heaven' those in 'Hell' seem as 'monsters with horrible countenances and horrible bodies'<sup>2.</sup> The heat in 'Heaven' is 'Celestial fire', the love of the Lord, while that of 'Hell' is 'infernal fire', the love of self and of the world. In other words the passive life in 'Heaven' is 'good' but the active life in 'Hell' is 'evil'.

The heat and light of 'Heaven' or 'energy', as Blake terms it, springs from divine sources; thus to believe that the worldly things excite love and heat in 'Heaven'

1. Ibid., p.85, no.113.
2. Ibid., p.100, no.131.



is 'contrary' to divine order:

'They are very greatly deceived, who believe That the influx of the heat of the world excites loves, for natural influx into what is spiritual does not exist, but spiritual into what is natural; the latter influx from divine order; but the former contrary to divine order'. 1.

Swedenborg frequently uses the phrase 'contrary to divine order'. In his chapter 'Concerning the Form of Heaven' he wrote:

'There is no influx given from the inferior heavens into the superior, because it is contrary to order'. 2.

And in the chapter 'Concerning the Power of the Angels of Heaven' he writes:

'... The power of the angels in the spiritual world is so great, that ... if anything in that world makes resistance, which is necessary to be removed because it is contrary to divine order ...'. 3.

or again:

'If men could be saved by immediate mercy, all would be saved, even they who are in hell, ... neither would there be a hell, because the Lord is Mercy Itself, Love Itself, and Good Itself; wherefore it is contrary to His Divine (Principle) to say, that he is able to save all immediately; and doth not save them ....' 4.

The word 'contrary' is used in various contexts in Heaven and Hell. There frequently occur statements such as:

Those 'who are in hell are altogether contrary to innocence' 5.

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1. Ibid., p.103, no.135.
  2. Ibid., p.153, no.209.
  3. Ibid., p.167, no.229.
  4. Ibid., p.450, no.524.
  5. Ibid., p.214, no.283.

- 'contrary to the man's affection'. 1.  
 'contrary to religion, thus contrary to Divine (Being or Principle)' 2.  
 'contrary to truth ...' 3.  
 'contrary to the good of mutual love ...' 4.  
 'contrary to the truth of faith'. 4.  
 'contrary to conjugal love' 5.  
 'contrary to love ..... ' 6.  
 'contrary is the state of those who in the world lived in evil ...' 7.

'Those things which are contrary to the things of heaven and of the Church'. 8.

These are just random examples taken from Heaven and Hell. The idea of 'contraries' in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, however, specifically refers to the chapters 'Concerning the Changes of State of the Angels in Heaven', 'Concerning Time in Heaven' and 'Concerning Space in Heaven'.

Swedenborg discusses his 'love' and 'progression' towards good or the superior state of life or 'Heaven' and his rejection or negation of disagreeable states or 'Hell'. Blake retorts saying that 'love', 'affection' and 'attraction' to the good of life and hate or repulsion of undesirable life is necessary for human existence but these contraries must be based on one's own energy or active life. Swedenborg, as we have pointed out before, unlike Blake, put much more stress on the scholastic and passive

1. Ibid., p.222, no.299.
2. Ibid., p.251, no.319.
3. Ibid., p.252, no.321.
4. Ibid., p.270, no.342.
5. Ibid., p.316, no.384.
6. Ibid., p.376, no.457.
7. Ibid., p.431, no.506.
8. Ibid., p.508, no.585.



religion than on a practical life. The theme of 'contraries' is in fact a criticism of the passive and static life as opposed to the active and practical life.

In the chapter 'concerning the change of State of the Angels in Heaven' Swedenborg explains the mental states of the Angels at different parts of the day. The angelic life consists of 'love' and 'faith' or 'wisdom' and 'intelligence'. Since all wisdom and intelligence stem from the Lord, those who are in love with the Lord and have faith in His divine principle possess wisdom and intelligence. In other words the states of wisdom and intelligence are based on love and faith. The Angels live in a state of wisdom and intelligence because they are in love with the Lord. They do not depend on the world or active life, but live in the 'state' of love. The delight of angels or energy depends on the 'state of their love.'

Although the Angels live only in the 'state' of love nonetheless the degree of their love varies: 'angels are not constantly in <sup>a</sup> similar state as to love ...sometimes they are in a state of interior; it decreases by degrees from its greatest or its least.'<sup>1</sup> When the Angels are in the greatest degree of love they are then 'in the light and heat of their life, or in their brightness and delight .....'<sup>2</sup> In other words the delight of angels increases or decreases by the change of their 'love'. They change

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1. Ibid., p.118, no.155.

2. Ibid.



like 'the variations of the state of light and shade, of heat and of cold, or like morning, mid-day, evening, and night ..... morning the first and highest degree of love; mid-day wisdom in its light; evening wisdom in its shade ...' All these changes occur in the abstract thought of Swedenborg who has divorced himself from reality. Blake brings the passive and abstract religion of the priest down to earth by writing in the 'Proverbs of Hell':

'Think in the morning. Act in the noon. Eat in the evening. Sleep in the night'. 1.

Swedenborg's thought is abstract because while rejecting the active life in 'Hell' as 'contrary' to an 'opposite' state to his 'state' of love, discusses the change of 'state' in 'Heaven'. Since the changes of 'state' are not based on practical life they are abstract.

Swedenborg gives three reasons for the change of states in the Angels. Firstly that 'delight of life and of heaven, which they enjoy by virtue of the love and wisdom derived from the Lord, would by degrees lose its value, if they were continually in it; as is the case with those who are in the enjoyment of delights and pleasantnesses without variety'.<sup>2</sup> Secondly that they have their 'proprium as well as men, and that all who are in heaven are withheld from their proprium, ..... but in proportion as they are not withheld, in the same proportion they are in the love of self; and since everyone loves his own proprium

1. M.H.H. (K. p.152).

2. H.H. p.120, no.153. The word 'delight' is extensively used in H.H.

and is attracted by it, therefore they have changes of state  
 ....<sup>1.</sup> Blake has apparently taken the words 'delight'  
 and 'attraction', as we shall see later, from the passages  
 such as above. Thirdly the angels become 'accustomed to  
 be held in the Lord's love, and to be withheld from the  
 love of themselves; and also the perception and sensation  
 of good is rendered more exquisite by the vicissitudes of  
 what is delightful and undelightful.'<sup>2.</sup> The state of  
 'delight' always comes from the Lord because 'the Lord as  
 a sun always flows in with heat and light, that is, with  
 love and wisdom'.

All this means that 'love' and the 'delight' of life  
 in 'Heavens' are derived from divine sources as opposed to  
 the love and delight which are derived from the world and  
 the creative energy of man. And the change of 'state'  
 in heaven is the change of 'love' and 'delight' which are  
 the 'life' of angels.

In the chapters 'Concerning Time in Heaven' and  
 'Space in Heaven' which follow the chapter on 'The Changes  
 of State ...', Swedenborg discusses the idea of 'progression'.  
 Progression means a change from one 'state' to another.  
 In the world this progression takes place in 'time' and  
 'space' but in 'heaven' 'time' and 'space' do not exist.:

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1. Ibid., p.121, no.158.  
 2. Ibid., p.121, no.158.

'The reason why there are times in the world, is, because the sun of the world to appearance is in successive progression from one degree to another, and makes the times ..... It is otherwise with the sun of heaven; this doth not, by successive progressions and circumgyrations, make years and days, but, to appearance, changes of state ... hence the angels can not have any idea of time, but in its place they have an idea of state ...' 1.

Because the angels have no idea of time, their concept of 'eternity' differs from the earthly meaning of the word:

'The angels by eternity perceive infinite state, but not infinite time .....' 2.

To the passive personality or mind 'eternity' or creation is based on abstract memories and is therefore independent of 'time' and 'space' or reality. For the creative personality it is based on active life and depends on time and space. In his 'Proverbs of Hell' Blake criticizes Swedenborg's idea of 'time' by stating that:

'Eternity is in love with the productions of time'.

In other words 'eternity' depends on time which represents creativity and activity or the beginning and end of an act of creation in the world. Since the end of one act of creation is the beginning of another cycle of creation therefore 'eternity' is in love with the production of 'time'. <sup>The</sup> / new is born out of <sup>the</sup> / old and <sup>the</sup> / present out of the past. This is demonstrated both in nature, in society and in the daily life of an active person like Blake. The

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1. Ibid., p.124, no.164. Swedenborg also uses the term in his other writings. See, for instance, Appendix IV.
  2. Ibid., p.125, no.167.



words 'eternity' and 'time' in the proverb are apparently taken from the chapter 'Concerning Time in Heaven'.<sup>1.</sup>

By the idea of 'time' Swedenborg means 'state'.<sup>2.</sup>  
Even in the Bible: 'times, in the Word, signify states'.  
The concepts of 'progression' and of 'contraries' in Heaven and Hell depend on the idea of 'state':

'All progressions in the spiritual world are affected by changes of the state of the interiors, so that progressions are nothing else but changes of state'.<sup>3.</sup>

The word 'state' means the interior quality of every man: 'States are predicated of life, and those things which relate to life'.<sup>4.</sup> The interior state of every man determines his external life. It is the interior 'state' of the angels which makes 'Heaven' and likewise it is the interior 'state' of inhabitants in 'Hell' which form their life. 'Heaven' and 'Hell' are opposite or 'contrary' to each other because their interior states are opposite or 'contrary' to each other. The interior 'state' of angels in 'Heaven' is 'good' but the interior 'state' of the people in 'Hell' is 'evil' because:

'the state of heaven .... is the conjunction of good and of truth ... , and the state of hell is the conjunction of what is evil .... '<sup>5.</sup>

In other words the interior of those who do active or manual work is 'evil' and the interior of angels who belong to 'Heaven' or their passive memories is 'good'.

1. Ibid., pp.123-127, no. 162-69.
2. Ibid., p.164, no. 185.
3. Ibid., p.141, no. 192.
4. Ibid., p.117, no. 154.
5. Ibid., p.349, no. 422.

A closer examination of Heaven and Hell reveals that to Swedenborg 'state' meant the memories formed by impressions of the sense principle. In other words these memories form the 'state' of the interiors in the inhabitants of 'Heaven' and 'Hell'. The 'state of Heaven' is a conjunction of 'good' and 'truth' and 'good' and 'truth' are based on 'will' and 'understanding'. Man is attracted towards 'good' by his 'will' and 'understanding' for 'whatever a man wills and thence thinks he calls good'.<sup>1.</sup> The 'will' and 'understanding' of man, as we shall see while discussing the meaning of the word 'act', are mainly based on social background and memories formed by sense perception. Man is capable of 'thinking' from 'understanding' and 'what is only in the understanding ... being only a thing of his memory, and a thing of science in the memory ....'<sup>2.</sup> Thus the interior state of man is determined by his 'will' and 'understanding' or memory principle. The motivating love of every man is based on his interior state or memories. Those who have good interiors are attracted to the 'good' or 'Heaven' whereas those with 'evil' interiors are attracted to 'Hell'. The 'progressions' are also based on the changes of interior states:

3.

'progressions are nothing else but changes of state;'

From the ideas of 'interior state' and 'progression' Swedenborg forms his idea of 'contrary state'. The 'progression' is based on the 'interior state' or memory

1. Ibid., p.350, no.423.

2. Ibid.

3. p.141, no.192.



principle. Man progresses towards 'similitudes' or what agrees with the 'state of <sup>the</sup> interior'. He rejects or removes 'dissimilitudes'. Therefore those who are in a similar 'state' are near to each other and at distance or divided from those who are in a 'contrary state'. All the angels progress towards 'similitudes' according to their 'state <sup>the</sup> of interiors' and separate themselves from what is being in a 'contrary state':

'This being the case with progressions, it is evident that approximations are similitudes as to the state of the interiors, and that removals are dissimilitudes; hence it is that they are near to each other who are in a similar state, and at a distance, who are in a dissimilar state, ...  
..... hence likewise it is that the heavens, as being in a contrary state.' 1.

All this means that what agrees with the driving 'love' or memories of Swedenborg is 'good' and whatever disagrees with his 'love' and limited impressions formed by his environment or upbringing is 'evil'. In other words his passive memories are 'good' but active life is 'evil': His progression is in fact an escape from reality and like Tiriel he is returning to his passive memories. Thus the priest divides two 'contrary' states of creation into 'good' and 'evil' or 'Heaven' and 'Hell'. Blake wrote:

'From these contraries spring what the religious call Good and Evil. Good is the passive that obeys Reason. Evil is the active springing from Energy. Good is Heaven. Evil is Hell.' 2.

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1. p.142, no.193.  
2. M.H.E. (K. ed. p.149.)



By the 'religious' or 'religion', as we shall see later, Blake meant the mentality or religion which is based on abstract memories of the priest or rigid system of 'Heaven' and 'Hell'.

The passive personality or mind obeys the passive 'Reason' which leads him, as we shall see in The Gates to Paradise, to his passive memories or 'cave'. All things in his passive memories are delightful and good. For the 'life' or energy of passive personality comes from his passive memories. Active or practical life which comes from <sup>the</sup> 'energy' of man appears to the passive personality as 'Hell' or 'evil' and those who work in 'hells' are 'devils'. Blake who worked throughout his whole life and depended on the natural rewards of his own energy speaks out, as the 'Devil', from 'Hell' against the abstract religion of Swedenborg, who is sitting amid the plenty of 'Heaven' and punishing the less fortunate for their love of the world or 'Body'.

#### 4. The Voice of the Devil

'All Bibles or sacred codes have been the causes of the following Errors:

1. That / Man has two real existing principles:  
Viz: a Body <sup>&</sup> a Soul.
2. That Energy, call'd Evil, is alone from the Body;  
<sup>&</sup> that Reason, call'd Good, is alone from the Soul.

3. That God will torment Man in Eternity for following his Energies.

But the following Contraries to these are True:

1. Man has no Body distinct from his Soul; for that call'd Body is a portion of Soul discern'd by the five Senses, the chief inlets of Soul in this age.
2. Energy is the only life, and is from the Body; and Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy.
3. Energy is Eternal Delight. <sup>1.</sup>

This plate is the most important part of The Marriage where two opposing theories of the source of life are juxtaposed. One theory is that man's thought, delight, joy and energy spring from the 'soul', or a metaphysical source, and the other theory is that they spring from the 'Body' or the material world. One places priority on the 'soul' or subject, and the other on matter or the object.

Swedenborg assumed that all things in life including all the good things of 'Heaven' flow, like a fountain, from the Lord. Those who are showered by divine good and truth from this fountain are in 'Heaven', and those who reject this divine, good and truth are in 'Hell'. The angels life stems from one single source, the Lord. They insist that 'there is only one single fountain of life

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1. M.H.H. (K. p.149).

and that the life of man is a stream thence derived, which would instantly cease to flow, if it did not subsist continually from its fountain'. Those who receive 'divine good and divine truth ..... in faith and life have heaven in them, but those who reject them .... turn them into hell.'<sup>1</sup>

Discussing the 'life of love' and the 'life of the will of man', Swedenborg writes in the same passage:

'... all of life is from the Lord, they also confirm by this consideration that all things in the universe have reference to the good and truth, the life of the will of man, which is the life of his love, to good, and the life of the understanding of man, which is the life of his faith, to truth; wherefore since everything good and true comes from above, it follows that all of life is likewise from the same source'.<sup>1</sup>

This is the orthodox religious interpretation, which under-rates the importance of the material world. Human energy comes from the 'Body' and is anyway inferior to 'Reason'. But to Blake 'Energy is the only life, and is from the Body; ... ' Man's ability to work depends on food and drink from the material world, and his thoughts correspond to the objects of his particular interest in the world.

Swedenborg believed that what is 'evil' comes from the 'Body' or 'flesh', and what is 'Good' comes from the

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1. H.H., no. 9, p.10.



'Soul' or the spirit. In other words man has two existing principles: a 'Body' and a 'Soul'. It follows that the <sup>the</sup> 'delight' of/'Body' is evil but <sup>the</sup> 'delight' of/soul is good.

'The delights of the body or of the flesh all flow forth from the love of self and from the love of the world, hence they are concupiscence and the pleasures attending them; ..... but the delights of the soul or spirit all flow forth from the love to the Lord ... hence they are the affections of good and truth, and interior satisfactions: These latter loves with their delights flow in from the Lord, and out of heaven, <sup>i</sup> by an internal way, which is from above, and they affect the interiors but the former loves with their delights flow in from the flesh and from the world by an external way, which is from beneath, and they affect the exteriors.' 1.

Those who look to the 'Heaven' are in innumerable 'delights' but those look to the world and are in the 'love of self and of the world, hath no sensation of any delight but what is to be found in honour, in gain, and in the pleasures of the body and the senses, ...' <sup>2.</sup> The reason 'why love to the Lord is of such a quality is, because the love of the Lord is the love of communication of all that He hath with all, for He wills the happiness of all'. <sup>3.</sup> By the word 'all' Swedenborg meant all angels in 'Heaven': 'How great the delight of heaven is, may be manifested only from this consideration, that it is a delight to all in heaven to communicate their delights and blessings to another ... <sup>4.</sup> all in the heavens are of such a character ...'

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1. H.H. p.326, no.396. (our emphasis).
  2. Ibid., p.327, no.398.
  3. Ibid., p.328, no.399.
  4. Ibid., p.327, no.399.

Those who look to 'Heaven' and love the Lord are principled in the 'delight' of 'Heaven', and those who look to the world and are in the love of self of the world are principled in the 'delight' of the 'concupiscence' which is altogether opposite to the 'delight' of 'Heaven'. The God of 'Heaven' will 'torment' those who are in the love of self and of the world:

'... When they who are principled in the love of self and of the world approach to the first threshold of ... heaven, they begin to be tortured and so interiorly tormented, that they feel in themselves rather hell than heaven, ...'. 1.

Or in other words, as Blake puts it, 'God will torment Man in Eternity for following his Energies'. The people in 'Hell', as we have shown in the first chapter, are the workers in the mines or those whose life depends on their own energy. In a word 'life' and 'delight' of angels in 'Heaven' come from their love of the Lord or passive life are good and the 'life' and 'delight' of the people in 'Hell' come from the love of world and their 'Energy' or active life is evil. Thus those in 'Hell' who have to work for whatever they want, are condemned because their possessions spring from the 'infernal love' of self and the world. 'The things done by the man himself, and the things done from the man himself are all in themselves evil'.<sup>2</sup> In other words the 'passive' life is 'good' and the 'active' life evil. The 'delight' or 'energy' of the

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1. Ibid., p.329, no.400.  
 2. Ibid., p.410, no.484.



angels in 'Heaven' is opposite to the 'delight' of those in 'Hell' because 'all things' of the Angels come to them 'gratis':

'they are clothed gratis, they are nourished gratis, they have habitations gratis ..... and more over they are gifted with delight and pleasantnesses according to the reception of wisdom from the Lord ...'<sup>1.</sup> Those who support their own life by working rather than receiving sustenance 'gratis' from the Lord, seem to have no place in Swedenborg's 'Heaven'.

Blake opposed this passive life and rejected the idea that good things and life itself spring from 'above' or some metaphysical source:

'Man has no Body distinct from his Soul; for that call'd Body is a portion of Soul discern'd by the five Senses, the chief inlets of Soul in this age. Energy is the only life, and is from the Body, and Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy. Energy is Eternal Delight'. 2.

Blake regarded Energy as the source of life and derived from the 'Body' or material world. It is a scientific theory, recognising that the superior position of the Angels in 'Heaven' stems mainly from their economic superiority rather than from an innate goodness.

Blake's central viewpoint that 'Energy is the only Life, and is from the Body' formed the social vision and philosophy of his later writings. In Visions of the

1. Ibid., p.195, no.266.  
2. M.H.H. (K. p.149).



Daughters of Albion (1793) he denounces conventional laws and asks:

'are there other wars beside the wars of sword and  
fire?  
And are there other sorrows beside the sorrows of  
poverty?  
And are there other joys besides the joys of riches  
and ease?  
And is there not one law for both the lion and the  
ox?  
And is there not eternal fire and eternal chains  
To bind the phantoms of existence from eternal  
life?' 1.

The child in 'The Little Vagabond' from the Songs of Experience points the same idea. He represents those who live in 'Hell' and who reject 'Heaven' as represented by the Church because, instead of pouring out sustenance 'gratis', it is barren and 'cold'. The child says that if the Church would share its material wealth and let the people in 'Hell' be as happy as those in 'Heaven', then the two separate classes would join and good and evil marry:

'Dear Mother, dear Mother, the Church is cold,  
But the Ale-house is healthy & pleasant & warm;  
Besides I can tell where I am used well,  
Such usage in heaven will never do well.  
But if at the Church they would give us some Ale,  
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,  
We'd sing and we'd pray all the live-long day,  
Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray'. 2.

Thus the war between 'Heaven' and 'Hell' rises from the material conflict.

The key-words in plate 4, 'Delight', 'Soul', 'Body',

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1. Visions of The Daughters of Albion, (K. p.192).
  2. Songs of Experience, (K. p.216).

'Good', 'Evil', and 'Energy' (which conveys the idea of the power, 'Heat', Light and material wealth of the Angels in 'Heaven') are related to Heaven and Hell. The reader will notice that this interpretation is sharply at variance with that put forward by Miss K. Raine.<sup>1.</sup>

The word 'Reason' in the passage conveys the rational personality or mind who binds or is the 'outward circumference' of 'Energy', or material exuberance. It is the material wealth of 'Energy' in 'Heaven' which attracts Swedenborg's reason. But his reason is passive and thus has no real moral value. Reason is passive, when it is based on the memories of a passive personality which Blake calls Urizen (your reason). Reason is creative and a necessary part of 'progression' or creation when it is based on the creative work of man.

The following illustration will show how the words 'Reason', 'Circumference' and 'Delight' in the passage are used by Blake to oppose the selfish moral values of Swedenborg. The words 'Reason' and 'circumference' frequently occur in Heaven and Hell. There are such statements as

'Man is capable of being elevated, as to all the interiors of his mind ..... of discoursing from reason', 2.

or those angels who are in love, wisdom and intelligence, are in the midst of 'Heaven' where the Lord is and those who

1. Songs of Experience, K. Raine, op. cit., pp.363-368. For the details see Appendix V.
2. Ibid., p.30, no.39.



are less excellent are round about 'comparatively as light<sup>1.</sup> in its decrease from the center to the circumferences'.

The words 'Reason' and 'circumference' appear in close conjunction in Heaven and Hell. They also occur together in Swedenborg's Divine Providence where he uses the word 'Reason' frequently while discussing his doctrine of 'Free-will' or 'Rationality':

'Man hath Reason and Free-will, or Rationality and Liberty; and ... these two Faculties are from the Lord in Man'.<sup>2.</sup>

Swedenborg believed that man has free-will and reason. In his Heaven and Hell he discusses what he meant by 'will':<sup>3.</sup> 'every deed and work proceeds from man's will and thought'. The 'will' and thought of man is based on his 'love'<sup>4.</sup> because 'love makes the man' and the 'will is what is enkindled by love'.<sup>5.</sup> The words 'will' and 'love', to Swedenborg, usually mean the same thing: 'all things of the will, which agree with the ruling loves: are called loves, because they are loved'.<sup>6.</sup> This 'love' and 'will' are based on memory principle. After the last judgment or 'death' every man's existence is a reflection of his previous life: 'his state after death is according to his life in the world',<sup>7.</sup> and '...the delights of every one's life are turned ...into corresponding delights ....'<sup>8.</sup>

1. Ibid., p.31, no.43.
2. E.Swedenborg, see The Wisdom of Angels concerning the Divine Providence. Manchester 1810 (originally published at Amsterdam.)
3. H.H., p.395, no.472.
4. Ibid., p.397, no.474.
5. Ibid., p.397, no.473.
6. Ibid., p.400, no.477.
7. Ibid., p.393, no.470.
8. Ibid., p.414, no.488.



All this 'ruling love' and 'will' are based on 'Reason'.  
 Man acts from 'Liberty' according to 'Reason'.<sup>1.</sup> The  
 angels in 'Heaven' are attracted to the things appropriate  
 to them, according to their 'Reason'. Thus 'Reason'  
 distinguishes 'good' from 'evil'. Those who are 'good'  
 form the center which is 'Heaven' and the evil doers live  
 on the 'circumference':

'Goods ..... make the center, and remove  
 The Evils towards the circumference ....' 2.

Swedenborg here also reflects the social relationship that  
 he discusses in his Heaven and Hell. In 'Heaven' the angels  
 live in palaces and houses which correspond to the 'good'  
 of angels: 'house in general corresponds to their good  
 ....'<sup>3.</sup> The angels and governors dwell in the 'midst' of  
 society: 'They dwell in the midst of society, in situations  
 elevated above others, and likewise in magnificent palaces';  
 thus the 'good' or inhabitants of 'Heaven' are in the midst  
 of society but the 'evil' or inhabitants of 'Hell' are at  
 the circumference or are kept at a distance from 'Heaven'.

Swedenborg's 'ruling affection' or the 'interior of  
 his mind' is being elevated and solely attracted to the  
 Centre which is nearest towards the Lord or the divine source:

'It was principally given to perceive, and  
 likewise to be sensible, that there was  
 an attraction and as it were a plucking  
 away of the interiors of my mind, thus  
 of my spirit, from the body, and it was  
 said that this was from the Lord'.<sup>4.</sup>

- 
1. Ibid., p. 96, no. 71.
  2. The Divine Providence, op. cit., p.101. no.79. (our emphasis).
  3. H.H. p.138, no.186.
  4. Ibid., p.366, no.449.

In other words Swedenborg is attracted to the 'good' in life and the object of his 'love' by the guidance of 'Reason'. He moves or progresses towards the centre or his material wealth which constitute his life and energy. The guider is 'Reason':

'..... whatever a man doth from Liberty according to his Reason remaineth; for no one thing which man hath appropriated to himself can be eradicated, in as much as it is made an object of his Love, and at the same time of his Reason, or of his Will, .... and thence of his Life. If something is not appropriate to Reason then this may indeed be removed ... from the center to the circumference, ...' 1.

2.

The word 'Reason' is used extensively in The Divine Providence. Blake takes the words 'Reason' and 'circumference' and turns Swedenborg upside down. To Blake the 'centre' conveys the 'Energy' which is the material wealth, towards which Swedenborg returns. His 'Reason' or 'Will' drives him towards his pleasant memories. In other words 'Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy'. But Blake, contrary to Swedenborg, looks at life and 'Energy' from a practical and moral viewpoint. He agrees with Swedenborg that Reason attracts one to what is 'appropriate' to one's 'love' and 'will' because 'Reason is the bound or circumference of Energy' and this 'Energy is the only life ...' But to Blake Reason is not enough. Reason is limited and selfish but 'Energy' is creative and

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1. E. Swedenborg. The Divine Providence, p.100, no.79.  
 2. See for instance Ibid., pp.90-101, nos 71-79.



selfless. 'Energy' is struggling to free itself from 'Reason'. Reason (Urizen) attempts to establish but 'Energy' opposes establishment. The former is a limited 'Delight' but 'Energy is Eternal Delight'. Though 'Energy' is from the 'Body' yet it is not, contrary to Reason, bound or subject to 'Body' or self-interest. The 'Energetic' and creative mind finds delight in pursuing an active and creative life, but the Reasoning mind finds delight only in passive memories. Swedenborg's 'delight' stems from the latter kind and he uses the term extensively in his Heaven and Hell as the following illustrations will show.

- 'The delights of consociation are according to the affinities of good in which they are principled.' 1.  
 '....it is proverbially said that variety delights, and it is a known thing that delight is according to its quality.'
- '....all beauty, pleasantness, and delight, which affect both the senses and the mind ....' 2.  
 '....in their brightness and delight ....' 3.  
 '....the delight of life and of heaven ..... ' 4.  
 '....in the enjoyment of delights ..... ' 5.  
 '....what is delightful and undelightful ....' 6.

- 
1. H.H., p.27, no.35.  
 2. Ibid., p.39, no.56.  
 3. Ibid., p.118, no.155.  
 4. Ibid., p.120, no.158.  
 5. Ibid.  
 6. Ibid., p.121, no.158.



Angels .... 'delight their minds more than their  
eyes....'<sup>1.</sup>

'....to promote use is the delight of the life of  
all....'<sup>2.</sup>

Angels... 'are gifted with delights and pleasantnesses...'<sup>3.</sup>

'....every delight of the world appears as nothing  
respectively.....'<sup>4.</sup>

'....every good hath its delight: both good and delight,  
is of love, .....'<sup>5.</sup>

'....heavenly joy and the delight of good.....'<sup>6.</sup>

'....for good is made sensible by its delight, and  
delight is known from its good:'<sup>7.</sup>

'....delight arising from the removal of cares and  
from success in business...'<sup>8.</sup>

'....the delightful things of wisdom....'<sup>9.</sup>

'....delights and pleasantnesses...are suited to their  
temper....'<sup>10.</sup>

'....the will gives ....delight.....'<sup>11.</sup>

There is 'delight of...spirit and...the delight of  
the body...the delight of the flesh, is...not  
heavenly...'<sup>12.</sup>

- 
1. Ibid., p.139, no.186.
  2. Ibid., p.161, no.218.
  3. Ibid., p.195, no.266.
  4. Ibid., p.214, no.282.
  5. Ibid., p.215, np.285.
  6. Ibid., p.217, no.287.
  7. Ibid., p.219, np.288.
  8. Ibid., pp.221-2, no.290.
  9. Ibid., pp.265-5, no.322-3.
  10. Ibid., p. 265, no.337.
  11. Ibid., pp.306-8, no.372.
  12. Ibid., pp.326-8, no.396-9.

'....the delights of heaven are ineffable, and....  
 innumerable, but of those innumerable delights not  
 one can be known...by him who is in the mere delight  
 of the body..'<sup>1.</sup>

'....how immense is the delight of heaven....'<sup>2.</sup>

'the interior torture is because of delights derived  
 from the love of self and of the world...'<sup>3.</sup>

'the delights of everyone's life are turned after  
 death into corresponding delights....'<sup>4.</sup>

'Those who are in Church "excell all others in the  
delight of wisdom....'<sup>5.</sup>

Swedenborg regarded the 'soul' or wisdom of the Angels as  
 the source of 'delight' in 'Heaven', but to Blake its source  
 lay in Energy which springs from the Body or the active  
 life of 'Hell'.

#### 5. Swedenborg's God is Blake's Satan.

Plates 5-6: 'Those who restrain desires, do so because  
 theirs is weak enough to be restrained; and the restrainer  
 or reason usurps its place <sup>&</sup> ~~and~~ governs the unwilling. And  
 being restrained, it by degrees becomes passive, till it  
 is only the shadow of desire.'<sup>6.</sup> This passage is apparently

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1. Ibid., p.327, no.398.
  2. Ibid., pp.327-31, no. 397-8.
  3. Ibid., pp.329-30, no.400.
  4. Ibid., p.414, no.488.
  5. Ibid., p.417, no.489.
  6. M.H.H. Plates 5-6 (K.pp.149-50). (our emphasis).



one of the difficult passages in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. It is hard to know what kind of 'desire' is 'restrained' and who is the 'restrainer.' But it seems to be understandable in the context of Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and is written in the criticism of this work.

The word 'restraint' is used in various ways in Heaven and Hell. There frequently occur statements such as:

- '....unless there were governments the infernals could not be kept under any restraint.'<sup>1.</sup>
- 'Thus bursts forth into open violence when unrestrained by fear.'<sup>2.</sup>
- 'man cannot be restrained.....'<sup>3.</sup>
- 'restrain them from .....'<sup>4.</sup>
- '....he thought freely and without restraint.....'<sup>5.</sup>
- '....under no restraint.....'<sup>6.</sup>
- '....restrained and checked them.....'<sup>7.</sup>
- '....external things do not restrain them.....'<sup>8.</sup>
- '....cannot be restrained nor broken except by punishments.'<sup>9.</sup>
- 'They....act without being restrained by external bonds.....'<sup>10.</sup>

- 
- 1. See, for instance, H.H. op.cit., pp.430-436, 458-459, 467, 471, 487, 498, 505 and pp.517-520. For the word 'governor' see pp.156-162.
  - 2. Ibid., p.221, no.290.
  - 3. Ibid., p.226, no.295.
  - 4. Ibid., p.322, no.391.
  - 5. Ibid., p.428, no.502.
  - 6. Ibid., p.430, no.505.
  - 7. Ibid., p.431, no.506.
  - 8. Ibid., p.432, no.507.
  - 9. Ibid., p.436, no.509.
  - 10. Ibid., p.459, no.531.



- '....unless civil laws....restrained him.....' <sup>1.</sup>
- '....plunge into evils....without restraint.....' <sup>2.</sup>
- '....Lord restrained the insults from the hells.....' <sup>3.</sup>
- '....the attempt ascending from hell was restrained...' <sup>4.</sup>
- '....the general tendency....issuing forth from the hells is checked and restrained.....' <sup>5.</sup>
- '....to restrain the insanities and disturbances...' <sup>6.</sup>
- 'The fear of punishment is the only medium to restrain...' <sup>7.</sup>
- 'The above mentioned bonds restrain it.....' <sup>8.</sup>
- '....torments in the hells are permitted by the Lord,... otherwise evils cannot be restrained....the only medium of restraining....keeping the infernal crew in bonds, is the fear of punishment.....' <sup>9.</sup>
- 'if good did not re-act against evil, and continually restrain its insurrection, .....unless the Divine (Being or Principle) alone affected such restraint:' <sup>10.</sup>
- '....it is said, unless the Divine....alone affected this restraint...' <sup>11.</sup>
- '....it is restrained by various means,.....' <sup>12.</sup>

1. Ibid., p.459, no.531.  
 2. Ibid., p.462, no.533.  
 3. Ibid., p.467, no.536.  
 4. Ibid., p.469, no.539.  
 5. Ibid., p.471, no.543.  
 6. Ibid.

7. Ibid.  
 8. Ibid., p.487, no.558.  
 9. Ibid., p.505, no.581.  
 10. Ibid., p.517, no.592.  
 11. Ibid., p.518, no.592.  
 12. Ibid., p.519, no.594.

'....outrages in the hells are subdued, and  
 1.  
 cruelties are restrained,.....'

The word 'desire' contrary to Kathleen Raine's statement  
 that it was taken from Boehme as one of the 'attributes  
 2. of Hell' seems rather to refer to Swedenborg's H.H. as <sup>Heaven and Hell</sup>  
 the following illustrations will show:

'....love receives all....things which are in  
 3.  
 agreement with itself; it desires them.'

'....a desire of conjoining them to .....'  
 4.

'....they would no longer desire higher things than  
 5.  
 in agreement with their life.'

'....the angels desire nothing more than that new  
 6.  
 angel guests may be admitted to them.'

'....he intensely desires his presence.....'  
 7.

'....he comes there sooner when he desires it, and  
 8.  
 later when he doth not desire it,....'

'....the way itself being lengthened and shortened  
 9.  
 according to desire,.....'

'....all in heaven desire wisdom,.....'  
 10.

'....he desires and appetite those things for this  
 11.  
 only reason.....'

'....such desire being innate in spirits,.....'  
 12.

1. Ibid., p.520, no.595.

2. See, for instance, K. Raine, op. cit., pp.366-7.

3. Ibid., p.16, no.18.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p.27, no.35.

6. Ibid., p.49, no.70.

7. Ibid., p.142, no.193.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p.143, no.194.

10. Ibid., p.205, no.272.

11. Ibid., p.210, no.279.

12. Ibid., p.270, no.343.



'....they who have had little of....desire, receive little, ..... but they who have had much .....

<sup>1.</sup>  
desire receive much....'

<sup>2.</sup>  
'....desire is as the measure.....'

<sup>3.</sup>  
'....the love is the source of....desire....'

<sup>4.</sup>  
Angels 'desire truth, and from desire seek it....'

They 'desire heaven with greater ardour than others,.....'<sup>5.</sup>

By the poor meant 'those who are wanting in those knowledges, and yet desire them,.....'<sup>6.</sup>

'....the poor man who lay at his gate, and desired to be filled with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table....'<sup>7.</sup>

'Spirits who come from the world into the other life, desire nothing more than to be admitted into heaven,.....'<sup>8.</sup>

'....such spirits have desired to know what heavenly joy is,.....'<sup>9.</sup>

'....what a spirit desires, .....is given him.... but, when communication was made,.....began to be tormented.'<sup>10.</sup>

<sup>11.</sup>  
'....they are desirous to be as angels,.....'

1. Ibid., p.275, no.349.
2. Ibid., p.276, no.349.
3. Ibid., p.276, no.349.
4. Ibid., p.279, no.352.
5. Ibid., p.294, no.360.
6. Ibid., p.299, no.365.

7. Ibid.
8. Ibid., p.329, no.400.
9. Ibid., p.329, no.400.
10. Ibid., p.330, no.400.
11. Ibid., p.335, no.406.



'....those who desired to know what heavenly joy is.'<sup>1.</sup>

'....they are called poor who are not in the knowledge of good and truth, and still desire them, in consequence of which desire they are likewise called hungry.'<sup>2.</sup>

'....there is constantly something of resistance, attended with ...desire to return to his like,...'<sup>3.</sup>

These are just random examples of the words 'restrain' and 'desire' taken from Heaven and Hell. Those in 'Hell' who attempt to ascend and 'desire' to know about heavenly joy and delight are being restrained. In the book of Hell the word 'lust' corresponds to the word 'desire': The 'lust of doing evil....originates in the love of self and of the world,.....'<sup>4.</sup>

Blake has picked out these words as of great significance and importance. To Blake the word 'restrain' means 'negation', and 'negative' is evil. The Angels who fulfil their own desires but restrain <sup>the</sup> desires of those in 'Hell' by calling them lust are committing 'the act of 'negation'. Blake associates the laws of restraint with reasoning and passivity. Northrop Frye, while discussing Blake's theory of evil, writes: '...all evil consists either in self-restraint or restraint of others'<sup>5.</sup> and 'evil....arises only

1. Ibid., p.338, no.410.

2. Ibid., p.347, no.420.

3. Ibid., p.401, no.479.

4. Ibid., p.497, no.571 (See also pp.498-9, nos.572-5).

5. Northrop Frye. Fearful Symmetry (Princeton 1947), p.55. See also pp.55-60.

from passivity, the negative refusal to perform a creative act which results in frustrating either one own's development or that of others'.<sup>1.</sup> We shall, however, discuss this point in detail when examining the proverb: 'The most sublime act is to set another before you'.

The poet seems to have great insight into the psychological mechanism of the passive being. By the passive being we mean the personality or mind which is not based on active and practical life. The priest is a passive character, having power only to restrain and negate desire and energy in people. He is too weak to work creatively and his natural life depends on the work of other people. Thus Swedenborg restrains the desire and energy of those in 'Hell' because he himself is not active.<sup>The</sup> restrainer is passive and weak. He escapes from reality and builds a protective circle around himself by the reasoning power of good and evil. This negative attitude builds up until the being becomes wholly passive and ruled by 'reason'. 'Urizen' which is a transliteration of 'your reason' is based on this passive 'reason'. It is limited and essentially formed by sense perception or natural memories, which are based on selfhood.<sup>2.</sup>

'The history of this is written in Paradise Lost, and the Governor or Reason is call'd Messiah. And the original Archangel, or possessor of the command of the

1. Ibid., p.293.
2. M.M.H., Plates 5-6, (K. p.150).

heavenly host, is call'd the Devil or Satan, and his children are call'd Sin and Death. But in the Book of Job, Milton's Messiah is call'd Satan. For this history, has been adopted by both parties. It indeed appear'd to Reason as if Desire was cast out, but the Devil's account is, that the Messiah fell, and formed a heaven of what he stole from the Abyss. This is shewn in the Gospel, where he prays to the Father to send the comfort<sup>e</sup>r or Desire, that Reason may have Ideas to build on; the Jehovah of the Bible being no other than he who dwells in flaming fire. Know that after Christ's death, he became Jehovah<sup>1</sup>.

This passage is a brief interpretation of Paradise Lost. We are more interested at the moment, however, to illustrate briefly how the words 'restrain' and 'Satan' refer to Heaven and Hell. Blake, while commenting on Swedenborg's doctrine of 'restraint' and fear of punishment, wanted to point out the similarity of subject matter in Swedenborg, Milton and the Book of Job, though each work has a different standpoint.

In Paradise Lost the 'Governor or Reason is called the Messiah', in Heaven and Hell the Governor and restrainer is called the Lord; but in the Book of Job, Milton's Messiah is called Satan. Blake implies that Swedenborg's restraining or punishing character, who sees the world only through the 'abyss of five senses' or selfhood is Satan. This 'abyss of five senses' is the natural memories

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1. M.H.H. Plates 5-6, (K. p.150).



on which the priest's knowledge and judgment of the outside world is based.<sup>1.</sup>

Swedenborg's God is rather Blake's Satan and Blake's God is Swedenborg's Satan. Swedenborg's God is the passive character who has but one desire, one love and one law. His desire is passive and limited to what he has already perceived; therefore his reason is also limited. Reason can be creative and unlimited only when desire is creative and active. When desire is creative, or not based on limited sense perception or fixed natural memories, then reason can be creative and 'have Ideas to build on'. This creative reason is the Messiah or God or Imagination. The passive and negative reason is Satan who accuses and punishes his children.

Discussing the identity of Satan, Frye writes:

'In the human mind he is the death impulse or selfhood which reduces men to becoming either death-dealing tyrants or torpid and inert victims of them. He is the "accuser" or principle of unbelief which makes tyrants revengeful and victims terrified; this mutual interaction of revenge and terror being the basis of fallen society. In this world Satan is therefore the objective counterpart of the death-impulse,....'<sup>2.</sup>

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1. See, for details, N. Frye, op. cit., pp. 60-84.  
 2. Northrop Frye, op. cit., p.135.

Frye's interpretation is apt and correct but, in his study of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell he has not examined Swedenborg's God and Satan.

Swedenborg's God, as we shall see while discussing Law and Religion, seems to have the characteristics of Satan. He is selfish and cruel; he accuses his children of indulging themselves in love of the self and of the world while he himself lives amid material wealth, or, in other words, he is imprisoned in his own selfhood both in mind and body. The people in 'Hell' are restrained from their desire and are thus victims of the priest's negative self-hood. The priest justifies himself by committing all his negative actions in the name of the Lord. Thus Blake writes: 'Know that after Christ's death, he became Jehovah.' The priest altered the original teachings of Jesus after his death, and accuses and punishes the people in the name of Christ. Thus the Christ who came to bring love becomes Jehovah, the God of punishment.

The death-impulse or selfhood is created in the priest because he has divided himself from the people. He first becomes himself the victim of his own selfhood. Then his passive reason or selfhood leads him to rule the unwilling part in himself and people. He is divided both in mind and body; in mind because he considers himself superior to and wiser than the simple people and uses his wisdom as means for his own ends; in body or society because he considers his material wealth as proof of his moral superiority over the simple people.

This outlook, in Blake's view, springs from the priest's passive upbringing and 'systematic reasoning':

'I have always found that Angels have the vanity to speak of themselves as the only wise; this they do with a confident insolence sprouting from systematic reasoning'<sup>1.</sup>

Swedenborg's Satan, unlike his God, seems an active and creative being. Swedenborg, in general, calls the energetic or active people who work in 'Hell' Satan and devil. He repudiates the orthodox view of there being one Satan in 'Hell', saying 'in the Word mention is made of the devil and Satan, and also of Lucifer.' The devil is 'That hell which is to the back and where the worst dwell'; Satan is 'That hell which is in front, the inhabitants of which are not so malignant....'; and Lucifer is 'Babel or Babylon'. All 'who are in the hells, like all who are in the heavens, are from the human race'<sup>2.</sup>

Since by Satan and the devil, Swedenborg means those who work in 'Hell' or coal mines, it follows that his Satan and devil are the active and creative characters in 'Hell' who oppose the passive and selfish God of the priest in 'Heaven'. They are ruled over by the unjust laws of the Church who 'steal the labor of others to support'<sup>3.</sup> their God. God represented law and Satan, like Milton's Satan, is struggling to be free. R.W. Harris in his recent book, Romanticism and Social Order has pointed out that

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1. M.H.H. Plates 21-22, (K. p.157).
  2. Heaven & Hell, p.471, no.543; see also p.242, no.311.
  3. M.H.H., plates 15-17 (K. p.155).



in '.... Blake's pregnant criticism of Milton's Paradise Lost which was very similar to Shelley's: ....God stood for the law, whereas Satan appeared as the individual struggling to be free, and Blake's sympathy like that of Shelley, was on the side of Satan.'<sup>1.</sup>

Swedenborg's Satan or devil seems to Blake more prolific and moral than his devouring God. It is also perhaps, this moral superiority of the devil character in Swedenborg which makes Blake side with him and speak for the Devil against the Angel. The energetic beings in 'hell' or the coal mines are morally more acceptable and attractive than the passive angels and their God in 'heaven': 'Messiah or Satan or tempter was formerly thought to be one of the Antediluvians who are our Energies'.<sup>2.</sup>

Blake puts 'Messiah' or 'Satan' or 'Tempter' on an equal footing because, although people look at the active life or energy differently and give them different names, they are basically the same thing. Swedenborg regards energy as infernal and calls it Satan; Blake sees it as creative and calls it 'Messiah'; for the history of the Messiah and Satan 'has been adopted by both parties'.<sup>3.</sup> One party looks at energy and active life through the fallen 'abyss of the five senses' and sees it as finite and

1. R.W. Harris, Romanticism and <sup>the</sup> Social Order, op.cit.,
2. Ibid., p.155. p.155.
3. Ibid., p.150.

infernial. The fallen man is drowned in the flood of sense perception which closes him up 'till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern'.<sup>1.</sup> Another party looks at energy and active life through undefiled doors of perception or eyes, and sees it infinite and holy. Energy is holy because it is the prolific part of man and the natural life and individuality or dignity of man depends on his creative energy. Antediluvians, perhaps, are the energies which have not yet closed themselves up in the abyss of the five senses or selfhood who is Satan and Accuser. Blake in his 'Epilogue' to The Gates of Paradise (1793) wrote:

'To the Accuser who is  
The God of This World

Truly, My Satan, thou art but a Dunce,  
And dost not know the Garment from the Man.  
.....  
Tho' thou art Worship'd by the Names Divine  
Of Jesus & Jehovah, thou art still  
The Son of Morn in weary Night's decline,  
The lost Traveller's Dream under the Hill. (1)

① The Gates of Paradise, (K. p. 771)

CHAPTER IIIPROVERBS OF HELL1. Plate 6-7: A Memorable Fancy:

'As I was walking among the fires of hell, delighted  
 the  
 with/enjoyments of Genius, which to Angels look like  
 torment and insanity, I collected some of their  
 proverbs, thinking that as the sayings used in a  
 nation mark its character, so the proverbs of Hell  
 show the nature of Infernal wisdom better than any  
 description of buildings or garments.

When I came home: On the abyss of the five senses,  
 where a flat sided steep frowns over the present  
 world, I saw a mighty Devil folded in black clouds,  
 hovering on the sides of the rock: with corroding  
 fires he wrote the following sentence now perceived  
 by the minds of men, and read by them on earth:

How do you know but ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy  
 way,  
 Is an immense world of delight, clos'd by your  
 senses five?' 1.

All this is based on ironical criticism of Swedenborg

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1. Ibid., (K. p.150). The phrase 'A Memorable Fancy', which Blake uses as a title for plates 6-7 and the following plates in The M.H.H., is apparently taken ironically from Swedenborg's 'Memorable Relation'. See, for example, The Apocalypse Revealed. Vol.1, pp.565-9, no.484.



who puts his passive memories before and against practical life. He divides his own intellectual and mental activity from practical life and thus puts one against the other. In Heaven and Hell Swedenborg talks about joys, delights and buildings in which Angels live and the garments that they wear. The words 'fire', 'joy', 'torment', 'insanity', 'infernal', 'wisdom', 'building' and 'garment' occur frequently in Heaven and Hell, and Blake's own use of them in Plates 6-7 was almost certainly suggested by Swedenborg. It will be helpful to list some examples of these words in Heaven and Hell.

Fire:

'The heat in heaven is what is meant by sacred and celestial fire and the heat of hell is what is meant by profane and infernal fire,.....'

'....by celestial fire love to the Lord.....'

'....by infernal fire the love of self and the love of world,....'

'....to speak of a man being inflamed,.....being  
on fire...' <sup>1.</sup>

'....some spurious fire, kindled by the love of self  
and of the world,....' <sup>2.</sup>

'What is meant by infernal fire....' (P.492, no.566).

'....When the hells are opened, there is seen as it were a fiery appearance which smokes, such as is usually seen in buildings on fire,....'

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1. H.H. p.102, no.134.

2. Ibid., pp.164-5, no.224.

'a dense fiery appearance exhaling from the hells where self love prevails, and a flaming appearance from the love of the world prevails.'<sup>1.</sup>

'Such torments are the torments of hell, which are called infernal fire.'<sup>2.</sup>

Joy:

'....it is not known what heavenly joy is....'<sup>3.</sup>

'....external joys which are of the natural man.'<sup>4.</sup>

'....from those principles heavenly joys proceed'.<sup>5.</sup>

Those in hell 'desired to know what heavenly joy is....'<sup>6.</sup>

'....worldly joys are of no account respectively...'<sup>7.</sup>

'....granted me by The Lord to perceive the delights of heavenly joys....'<sup>8.</sup>

Torment:

'....an infernal ardour torments those who do not worship....'<sup>9.</sup>

'....they begin to be tortured and tormented,...they feel in themselves rather hell than heaven,....'<sup>10.</sup>

'....they began to be inwardly tormented....'<sup>11.</sup>

'....they apperceive in themselves infernal torment instead of heavenly joy....'<sup>12.</sup>

1. Ibid., p.497, no.571.

2. Ibid., p.500, no.574.

3. Ibid., p.325, no.395.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p.341, no.413.

6. Ibid., p.329, no.400.

7. Ibid., p.339, no.411.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p.282, no.354.

10. Ibid., pp.329-30, no.400.

11. Ibid., p.446, no.518.

12. Ibid., p.451, no.525.

(See pp.330-9, also see pp.414-20).



'....they are likewise inwardly tormented....' <sup>1.</sup>  
 Those who 'do not submit themselves, and yield  
 implicit obedience, are again tormented by various  
 methods;.... such torments are the torments of  
 hell....' <sup>2.</sup>

### Insanity:

They're tattered, dirty and hideous, everyone  
 according to his insanity....' <sup>3.</sup>  
 'they called insanity....' <sup>4.</sup>  
 'their delight dwells in insanity....' <sup>5.</sup>  
 '....concerning their insanities, and concerning  
 their lot....' <sup>6.</sup>  
 '....their insanity is restrained by the Lord....' <sup>7.</sup>  
 '....and the origin of insanity....' <sup>8.</sup>  
 '....Lord restrained the insults from the hells, and  
 checked the insanities....' <sup>9.</sup>  
 '....excites in them lusts....with sick insanities...' <sup>10.</sup>

### Infernal:

'The angels cannot endure infernal discourse:...' <sup>11.</sup>  
 They 'should induce infernal darkness....' <sup>12.</sup>  
 'Their infernal fire is the lust of glory....' <sup>13.</sup>  
 '....such things....are called infernal fire....' <sup>14.</sup>

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.497, no.571. | 8. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.461, no.532.  |
| 2. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.500, no.574. | 9. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.468, no.536.  |
| 3. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.135, no.182. | 10. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.497, no.571. |
| 4. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.136, no.183. | 11. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.179, no.245. |
| 5. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.221, no.290. | 12. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.244, no.312. |
| 6. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.433, no.508. | 13. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.282, no.354. |
| 7. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.434, no.508. | 14. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.331, no.401. |



1.  
'....either heavenly or infernal....'
- '....the things done from the Lord are all of them good; but the deeds and works of moral and civil life are infernal,...they are done from infernal love,  
2.  
....are done from the man himself....'
3.  
'....having loved infernal things and rejected heavenly'.
4.  
'every man....is conjoined to some society either infernal or heavenly....'
5.  
'....where their infernal society is....'
6.  
'...the infernal society which is in similar love:... whereas that love is infernal....'
7.  
Hence '....all infernal spirits turn...backward from the Lord....'
8.  
'....the infernal inhabitants shiver....'

#### Wisdom:

9.  
'What is the quality of the Wisdom of angels of heaven..'
10.  
'....it was made evident to me how great is their wisdom,...'
11.  
'The palace of wisdom,....'
12.  
'....in the light of wisdom....'
13.  
'They wonder how anyone can believe that he is wise from himself,....'

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.410, no.484. | 8. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.497, no.572.  |
| 2. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.436, no.510. | 9. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.193, no.265.  |
| 3. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.437, no.511. | 10. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.200, no.269. |
| 4. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.438, no.512. | 11. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.202, no.270. |
| 5. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.479, no.552. | 12. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.324, no.394. |
|                                  | 13. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.10, no.9.    |

'....he who descends from a superior heaven is  
deprived of his wisdom,....'<sup>1.</sup>

'They imbibed intelligence and wisdom....'<sup>2.</sup>

'....love is of good, wisdom is of good....'<sup>3.</sup>

'....the celestial angels discourse from....  
interior thought....they speak from wisdom....'<sup>4.</sup>

'....the speech of the wise is more interior....'<sup>5.</sup>

'....in the light of wisdom....'<sup>6.</sup>

'They are in a superior place, who,....excel  
others in wisdom....'<sup>7.</sup>

'The light of heaven is divine truth...therefore is  
divine wisdom....'<sup>8.</sup>

'In the same degree in which wisdom and intelligence  
prevail among angels, wicked men and cunning prevail  
also amongst infernal spirits....'<sup>9.</sup>

'....angels are perfected in intelligence and  
wisdom....'<sup>10.</sup>

'Building'or'Habitation'and'mansion:'

Angels 'have habitations...according to everyone's  
state of life.'<sup>11.</sup>

They 'are more magnificent than earthly habitations..<sup>12.</sup>

1. Ibid., p.26, no.35.

2. Ibid., p.66, no.87.

3. Ibid., p.139, no.186.

4. Ibid., p.176, no.241.

5. Ibid., p.178, no.244.

6. Ibid., p.324, no.393.

7. Ibid., p.324, no.393.

8. Ibid., p.100, no.131.

9. Ibid., p.502, no.577.

10. Ibid., p.392, no.469.

11. Ibid., p.136, no.136.

12. Ibid., p.137, no.183.



- 'I have seen the palaces of heaven,....' <sup>1.</sup>  
 'Their habitations are given gratis....' <sup>2.</sup>  
 '....some of them dwelling in palaces....' <sup>3.</sup>  
 'The hells are everywhere,....there is an exhalation...  
 of fire with smoke, such as appears in the air from  
buildings on fire....' <sup>4.</sup>  
 'In some hells there is an appearance as of the  
 ruins of houses and cities after fires, in which  
 ruins the infernal spirits dwell.....' <sup>5.</sup>

'Garment':

- '....the garments with which, the angels appear  
 clothed....' <sup>6.</sup>  
 '....angels are men, and live....they have garments,  
 habitations.' <sup>7.</sup>  
 '....their garments correspond <sup>to</sup> their intelligence....' <sup>8.</sup>  
 '....one hath more excellent garments than another..' <sup>9.</sup>  
 '....less intelligent have garments of different  
 colours....' <sup>10.</sup>  
 '....the most intelligent have garments glittering  
 as from flame....' <sup>11.</sup>  
 '....the reason why the garments of some are bright  
 and white....' <sup>12.</sup>

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.138, no.185. | 7. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.132, no.177.  |
| 2. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.324, no.393. | 8. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.132, no.178.  |
| 3. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.295, no.361. | 9. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.132, no.178.  |
| 4. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.509, no.585. | 10. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.132, no.178. |
| 5. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.509, no.586. | 11. <u>Ibid.</u>                  |
| 6. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.131, no.177. | 12. <u>Ibid.</u> , p.133, no.179. |



'....the angels are clothed with garments in  
heaven....'<sup>1.</sup>

'....garments, in the Word, signify truths and  
intelligence.'<sup>2.</sup>

'....they have more garments than one,....'<sup>3.</sup>

'....when they see themselves...in garments and  
houses....'<sup>4.</sup>

It should be clear from these random examples that the satirical force of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell comes partly from the way Blake appropriates Swedenborg's vocabulary. The effectiveness of the work also stems from Blake's honesty in his work and his dependence on creative manual labour rather than on passive memories.

Swedenborg walks among the people in 'Hell' or the 'infernal inhabitants' and puts down all his uneasy feelings. The coal mines or 'Hell' seem to him 'torment' and 'insanity' and the people there seem as 'monsters with horrible countenances and horrible bodies'.<sup>5.</sup> This is what Swedenborg has experienced while walking in 'Hell'. But Blake's experience of walking in 'Hell' is different. What seems 'torment' and 'insanity' to Swedenborg, a representative of the Angels, does not appear so to Blake. Instead he is 'delighted with the enjoyment of genius'

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p.134, no.180.
3. Ibid., p.135, no.181.
4. Ibid., p.246, no.313.
5. H.H. p.100, no.131.

which is the creative and working 'Energy' in man.

When Swedenborg returns to 'Heaven' or home from his visit to 'Hell' or coal mines he feels in peace and 'heavenly joy'; then he reasons from this that those who are in 'Hell' must also begin to be tortured inwardly when they approach to any heavenly society:

'...they who are principled in the love of self and of the world approach to the first threshold of heaven, they begin to be tortured and so interiorly tormented, that they feel in themselves rather hell than heaven, wherefore they cast themselves down headlong thence, nor are they at rest until they come into the hells amongst those of their own quality. It hath also very frequently been the case, that such spirits have desired to know what heavenly joy is, and when they have been told that it is in the interiors of the angels, they have wished to have it communicated to themselves, wherefore this also was granted, for what a spirit desires, who is not yet in heaven or in hell, is given him, if it conduces to any good purpose; but when the communication was made, they began to be tortured, insomuch that, by reason of their pain, they did not know in what posture to place their bodies; they were seen to thrust down their head even to the feet, and cast themselves to the earth, and there to writhe themselves into folding in the manner of a serpent, and this by reason of interior torture; such was the effect which heavenly delight produced with those who were



in delights derived from the love of self and of the world<sup>1.</sup>

But when Blake returns home from visiting 'Hell' he does not see the gulf between his 'Heaven' and 'Hell' or good and evil so wide and terrifying as Swedenborg did. To 'the abyss of the five senses' or the passive and limited memories of the Angel there seems a wide gulf between work and home, as between two 'contrary states' or conditions: 'where a flat sided steep frowns over the present world'. To Swedenborg the people in 'Hell' are being tormented because of their 'infernal delight' or love of self and of the world. He sees how they are 'folding in the manner of a serpent.'

But Blake's experience, as a representative of <sup>the</sup> Devil or those who work and live in 'Hell', turns out to be different from that of the Angel. When Blake returns home from visiting 'Hell' he does not see the people in 'Hell' as Swedenborg does. Instead he sees a 'mighty Devil folded' (alluding to Swedenborg's 'folding....serpent') who asks the Angel:

'How do you know but every Bird that cuts the airy way, is an immense world of delight, closed by your senses five?' Blake implies that Swedenborg sees the world through his own limited outlook. In other words he is projecting his own feeling on those who work in 'Hell.'

1. H.H., pp. 329-30, no. 400.



Swedenborg was brought up among the rich priestly class and expects everyone to have the same outlook as himself. For a person who is accustomed to receiving all needs of life as 'gratis' from the Lord, it is natural to look at active and practical life as infernal and its delight not heavenly. Consequently, those who had to provide the necessities of life by their own labour, seemed engulfed in the love of self and of the world. Their work seems infernal. Swedenborg wants everything around him similar to himself, even in appearance, and assumes that he is the one who is morally superior to those who work and live in 'Hell'.

'the crow wished everything was black, the owl that  
<sup>1.</sup>  
 everything was white.'

## 2. Random Examples of Proverbs.

The Proverbs are opposing the passive memories or false art of Swedenborg. They are written in criticism of 'Heaven'. Swedenborg collects his memories from 'Heaven' but Blake collects Proverbs from 'Hell' on practical life 'thinking that as the saying used in a nation mark its character, so the Proverbs of Hell show the nature of Infernal wisdom better than any description of building or garments.' The 'Infernal wisdom' is alluding to Swedenborg's

1. M.H.H., 'Proverbs of Hell', (K. p.150).

'infernal' society or 'Hell'. Swedenborg calls the occupation of people in 'Hell' infernal.<sup>1.</sup> But to Blake Swedenborg's wisdom which is based on passive memories or false art is 'infernal'.

In this part we shall demonstrate that the proverbs are also related to the text of Heaven and Hell. We shall see that some proverbs of Hell need to be juxtaposed with Heaven and Hell for their form and meaning to be appreciated and that others may be here and there indebted to Heaven and Hell for phrasing. Blake takes the words and gives them his own meaning using them against <sup>the</sup> abstract philosophy of Swedenborg.

The following proverbs from the 'Proverbs of Hell' will serve to illustrate the relationship between The Marriage and Heaven and Hell: and how Swedenborg sets his passive memories or personality in opposition to the active or true Man.

1. Drive your cart and your plow over the bones of the dead.
2. The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom.
3. Exuberance is Beauty.
4. Bring out number, weight and measure in a year of dearth.
5. The most sublime act is to set another before you.
6. The cut worm forgives the plow.

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1. H.H. p.437, no.511.



7. Prisons are built with stones of Law, Brothels, with bricks of Religion. 1.

The first three proverbs are used by D.V. Erdman in his Prophet against Empire <sup>a</sup> as/heading for his chapter on The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. We shall examine closely and discuss four of these proverbs in the context of Heaven and Hell. We have chosen the other three proverbs because their themes are significant throughout the whole of Blake's work and therefore we shall discuss them in detail. For instance our purpose from the illustration of the proverb: 'The most sublime act is to set another before you' is to understand Blake's meaning of the word 'act', which in turn leads to the definition of the word 'negation.' In the other two proverbs the word 'worm' has symbolic significance and 'Law' and 'Religion' have social importance. We shall use the rest of <sup>the</sup> proverbs whenever necessary, and we shall particularly refer to them in the fifth chapter while discussing Swedenborg's idea of 'correspondence' and Blake's idea of 'Poetic Genius'.

We begin with the first proverb:

'Drive your cart and your plow over the bones of the dead'.

This apparently diabolical proverb seems to be directly related to Heaven and Hell rather than inspired by the French Revolution as David V. Erdman in his Blake Prophet Against Empire <sup>2</sup> has implied.

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1. M.H.H., 'Proverbs of Hell', (K. pp.150-2).
  2. See David V. Erdman. Blake Prophet Against Empire (Princeton 1954), p.160. See for details Appendix I.



The proverb refers to the chapter on 'The state of man after Death'. Swedenborg relates his memories of when he was in the natural body. 'Natural memory' means all that man has 'heard, seen, read, learned and thought, in the world, from earliest infancy even to the conclusion of life'.<sup>1.</sup> For example the descriptions of garments and their colours, the habitations and mansions of the Angels could be the product of the natural memories on which Swedenborg seems to have based his likes and dislikes.

All the things which have entered the memory 'remain, and are never obliterated';<sup>2.</sup> the impressions one receives stay fixed in the mind. Consequently, man can have an idea only of those things that he has seen.<sup>3.</sup>

There are some who appear beautiful, but are ruled by an evil memory. 'A wicked person, who in externals assumes the semblance of a good man'....but within whom 'is concealed filth of every kind'.<sup>4.</sup> Swedenborg quotes the Bible:

'Ye are like to whitened sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of the bones of the dead, and of all uncleanness'. (Matt. XXiii 27).<sup>5.</sup>

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1. H.H. p.379, no.461.
  2. H.H., p.384, no.463.
  3. The contents of this chapter are similar to Locke's memory principle and his idea of 'tabula rasa'.
  4. H.H. pp.429-30, no.505.
  5. H.H. p.430, no.505.

Blake, who essentially repudiates the memory principle as opposed to the creative energy in man, by using the phrase 'bones of the dead' from the St. Matthew quotation, tells the Angel that if he desires to cleanse himself from 'uncleanness' or 'the bones of the dead' he should honour and uphold the active and creative life against passive life. Reading the Bible differently Blake advises the Angel to drive his 'cart' and 'plow', which are apparently the symbol of active and practical life, over 'the bones of the dead.' In Blake's reading of the Bible 'the bones of the dead' represent the passive memories which are mostly based on the limited background and upbringing of every individual. In order to free the creative personality and energy we must not base our values and human relationship upon the limited sense perception or memory principle.

The words 'drive', 'cart' and 'plow' are also derived from the whole context of 'the state of Man after Death'. Swedenborg uses many symbols derived either from his environment or from nature. To explain the idea of 'memory' he represents life as a road along which man 'passes' from one world into another.<sup>1.</sup> As man 'carries'<sup>2.</sup> along with him his possessions he likewise carries along with him his natural memory. The 'memory' or the rational

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1. H.H., p.363, no.445. 'The bones of the dead'.  
 2. Ibid., p.379, no.461.



principle is also like to 'ground newly ploughed;...' <sup>1.</sup>  
 The vehicle used at that time for carrying things was the carriage or 'cart'. In the proverb Blake uses the words 'cart' and 'plow' in the proverbs as the symbol of active and practical life against the passive memory principle of Swedenborg: 'Drive your cart and your plow over the bones of the dead'.

The second proverb, 'The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom' again seems to be related to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell rather than inspired by the French Revolution as Erdman has implied. Swedenborg illustrates at great length the 'excess' of all goods of life and joy which the Angels possess, garments, houses, delights, knowledge, will, power, wisdom and so on. The Angels' 'possessions' are like those on earth but 'as to form more perfect', <sup>2.</sup> their 'delights' are 'innumerable' <sup>3.</sup> and their light 'exceeds' <sup>4.</sup> that of the world. The things in 'Heaven' are 'stupendous, all shining as of gold, silver

1. Ibid., p.388, no.464.  
 Swedenborg uses words like 'cultivate', 'plough', 'seed' and 'ground' to explain his 'rational principle of man'. Thus the word 'plow' is also possibly inspired by the text of H.H. See, for instance, pp.388-9, nos.464-6.
2. Ibid., p.128, no.171.
3. Ibid., p.327, no.398.
4. Ibid., p.53, no.75. See also p.380, no.462.



and precious stones'.<sup>1.</sup> There are furthermore 'innumerable things which could not be expressed in human language'.<sup>2.</sup> Those who enter 'Heaven' are first shown paradisiacal scenes which 'exceed' all idea of the imagination.<sup>3.</sup> Everything is more perfect in 'Heaven' in so far as 'angelic wisdom exceeds human wisdom'.<sup>4.</sup>

Swedenborg then discusses the 'wisdom' of the Angels which is difficult to comprehend as it so far 'transcends' human wisdom.<sup>5.</sup> They do not, however, have all the same degree of wisdom. The Angels are divided into classes according to their degree of wisdom, and only the highest, those who are principled in the truth of wisdom, can walk into the third, or innermost heaven. This Heaven contains 'a magnificent palace full of all things designed for use, encompassed with paradises on all sides, and with magnificent objects of various kinds'.<sup>6.</sup> Those lesser Angels who reason and 'dispute' about 'Truths' cannot enter into this paradise.<sup>7.</sup> They even 'cannot approach to the first threshold of the palace of wisdom'.<sup>8.</sup> They are not able 'to enter into the palace and walk about in the paradise, since they stop at the beginning of the way that leads to it.'<sup>9.</sup>

1. Ibid., p.338, no.411.
2. Ibid., p.338, no.411.
3. Ibid., p.339, no.412.
4. Ibid., p.132, no.177.
5. Ibid., p.197, no.267.
6. Ibid., p.202, no.270.
7. Ibid., p.202, no.270. (our emphasis).
8. Ibid.,
9. H.H. p.202, no.270 (our emphasis).

Thus the Angels in 'Heaven' exceed those who are in 'Hell' in everything. Only the Angels of the third 'Heaven' can enter the 'palace of wisdom.' While recounting the degrees of Angels, Swedenborg compares the wisdom of these Angels of the third degree with a 'palace full of all Things.' Since only the highest Angels can enter the 'palace of wisdom' it follows that the 'palace full of all things' or 'excess' corresponds to the 'palace of wisdom'.

Blake enjoyed an active life and its natural rewards, as opposed to the passive and idle life of the Angels which he obliquely criticises in the proverb: It is a road, not a palace of excess that leads to the 'palace of wisdom.' We perhaps hear the same voice in 'Thel's motto':

'Does the Eagle know what is in the pit?  
Or wilt thou go ask the mole?  
Can Wisdom be put in a silver rod?  
Or love in a golden Bowl?' 1.

By the 'road of excess' Blake means the road of the excess of work and experience in life, for 'Understanding or Thought' he wrote in his Annotations to Swedenborg's Wisdom of Angels is acquired by means of Suffering and Distress, i.e. Experience. Will, Desire, Love, Pain, Envy<sup>2</sup> ....are Natural, but Understanding is Acquired ....' And

1. The Book of Thel, (K. p.127).
2. Annotations to Swedenborg's ... Divine Love and Divine Wisdom. (K. p.89).



again opposing Swedenborg's statement that there are 'two ways.....strait' way 'leading.....into the light of heaven.' Blake wrote in the proverb: 'Improve<sup>1.</sup>ment makes strait roads; but the crooked roads without Improvement are roads of Genius.'

In other words work or creation is peculiar to the genius of man. Those who depend on their own creative energy are closer to true Man who is the 'Poetic Genius' or creative part in every body. This also corresponds to 'The Argument' that:

'Once meek, and in a perilous path  
The just man kept his course along....'

Human civilization originated from perilous paths and is based on human creative work. Passivity was created later.

Swedenborg attempts to find the origin of abundance in 'Heaven'. He relates it to the interior or spiritual 'state' of the Angels and defending the interest of contemporary church officials, he gives a Biblical interpretation to their existing position:

'The word by places and spaces, and by all things which drive anything from space, are signified such things as relate to state.....by measure of various kinds, by length, breadth, height and depth and by innumerable

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1. 'Proverbs of Hell', Plate 10, (K. p.152).



other things.....in heaven.....by length is meant a state of good, by breadth a state of truth, and by height their discrimination according to degrees.....as in Ezekiel .....by measure, as to length, breadth, and height, is described the new temple and new earth.....therefore by these measures are signified the things which are of the Church'.<sup>1.</sup> It is passages like these which Blake probably had in mind when criticising the priest's interpretation of the Bible: 'Bring out number, weight and measure in a year of dearth.'<sup>2.</sup>

Blake was not against variety and material life. On the contrary he believed that 'Exuberance is Beauty.' But he opposed Swedenborg's hypocrisy and his attitude in belittling the creative genius or the gifts of man and their natural rewards, which are to Blake the origin of 'Heaven.' Swedenborg on the one hand repeatedly mentions the 'excess' of everything in Heaven: Things are so 'num-<sup>3.</sup>erous' they 'could not be expressed in human language...'<sup>4.</sup> On the other hand he is horrified by the appearance of the people in 'Hell'.

'Exuberance is Beauty'<sup>5.</sup> is the third proverb that Erdman uses. Like the others, it is related to Heaven and

1. H.H. pp.143-46, no.197-200.
2. 'Proverbs of Hell', Plate 7, p.150.
3. H.H., p.128, no.171.
4. Ibid., p.338, no.411.
5. M.H.H., Plate 10, (K. p.152).

Hell. In this brief statement lies a deep criticism of Swedenborg who tries to rectify everything according to his own image and taste. He dislikes and is horrified by the appearance of those in 'Hell', or the people in the coal mines, because they appear different from the Angels in 'Heaven', with whom Swedenborg is more at home. Those in 'Hell' seem like men to each other, but in 'the light of heaven' they <sup>are</sup> as monsters with horrible countenances and horrible bodies..... In like manner man appears as to his spirit, when he is viewed by the angels; if he be a good man, he appears beautiful ..... if an evil man, as a monster .....<sup>1.</sup> Those in 'Hell' appear horrible to the Angels because they are motivated by the love of self and of the world. They appear beautiful to each other because they all share the same love.

All this derives from Swedenborg's principle that beings have two parts, the interior or spiritual part and the external or natural part. The spiritual part of the being is formed according to the dominating principle in his life. Those in 'Heaven', as we have pointed out before, are motivated by the love of wisdom and intelligence which comes solely from one source, the Lord, the 'fountain of life'.<sup>2.</sup> They are thus enlivened by one influence, and their love governs their exterior appearance: 'the

1. H.H., p.100, no.131 (our emphasis).
2. Ibid., p.10, no.9.



interiors of everyone' are 'made manifest in the face'.<sup>1.</sup>

Those in 'Hell' are motivated by the love of self and the world, and as there are many things in the world, they are at the mercy of many influences, which again are manifest in their external appearance. The material world thus creates different faces and appearances.

In man, the interior part can be an 'image of heaven',<sup>2.</sup> but the exterior is formed by the 'natural world'. In so far as man received the spirit of Heaven he is an 'image

of the greatest'<sup>3.</sup> and thus like the one. The exterior part has various appearances, because it is from various sources, and it is this variety which makes the natural body different from the spiritual body, and those in 'Heaven' from those in this world. The 'exteriors, which receive the world', Swedenborg stated, 'may be in a form according to the order of the world and hence in various beauty..... External beauty, which is of the body, originates in parents as its causes, and in formation in the womb, and is afterwards preserved by a common influx from the world; hence it is that the form of the natural man differs exceedingly from the form of his spiritual man.'<sup>4.</sup>

To Swedenborg all the various beauties of the external world are vastly inferior to the one beauty of the heavenly world. In the perfect spiritual world all appearances

1. H.H., no.131, p.100.

2. Ibid., p.74, no.94.

3. Ibid., p.74, no.94.

4. Ibid., p.74, no.99. (our emphasis).

stem from the one source; in man, the material world produces differences and variety. And those faces that differ from Swedenborg's 'Image of the greatest and his ideas of what is good and wholesome appear in the spirit' as deformed, black and monstrous; 'It hath been occasionally shewn me what was the spirit of man in its form and it was seen that in some who had beautiful and handsome faces, it was deformed, black and monstrous, so that it might be called an image of hell, not of heaven.'<sup>1.</sup> The 'beautiful and handsome faces' were deformed inside because their beauty was derived from the various beauties of the world and not from 'Heaven'. In 'Heaven', everyone's quality is 'manifest in the face' and thus 'all are known as to their quality in the light of heaven.'<sup>2.</sup>

Swedenborg wished everyone to be in the single image of 'Heaven'. Those who differed from the Angels in their opinions, professions and appearance are out of 'Heaven'.

Blake, on the other hand, regarded variety of faces, colour, opinions and professions not as a possible deformity,<sup>3.</sup> but rather as exuberant and beautiful: 'Exuberance is

1. Ibid., p.74, no.99.

2. Ibid., p.100, no.131.

3. Blake has discussed this in more detail in his 'Annotations to Lavater'. I quote the important passage: 'variety does not necessarily suppose deformity, for a rose and a lilly are various and both beautiful. Beauty is exuberant... etc.' (K. p.81. Aphorism 532).



Beauty'. The body of man is beautiful in the variety of its members, and people are beautiful with their various faces, desires, opinions and professions. But 'The apple tree never asks the beech how he shall grow; nor the lion<sup>1.</sup> the horse how he shall take his prey.'

This proverb is one of the marrying points in 'The Marriage of Heaven and Hell'. Here Blake marries all in energy or source of life. Swedenborg's outlook is a 'negation' because he divides one part against the other and one class against the other. He divides man into soul and body and his society into 'Heaven' and 'Hell'.

All this means that the proverbs that Erdman uses in his chapter on The Marriage of Heaven and Hell are related to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and based on criticism of Swedenborg's system rather than related to a remote source such as that of the French Revolution.<sup>2.</sup>

### 3. 'The Most Sublime Act is to Set Another Before You'

In this proverb the key word is 'act'. Blake and Swedenborg have different views on the meaning of this word. This difference stems from the essential difference in their background and outlook. What Blake means by 'act' is the opposite to what Swedenborg means by the word.

1. 'Proverbs of Hell', Plate 9, (K. p.152).

2. For the difference between my interpretation and that of Erdman see Appendix I.

Blake looks at <sup>an</sup> 'act' from a practical viewpoint and its values are based on whether the action is creative or negative. But for Swedenborg <sup>an</sup> 'act' is based on the 'will' of every man. Its values depend on the 'will' and 'affec-  
tion': 'To act is to will'.<sup>1.</sup> Swedenborg does not, however, seem to consider the moral side of the argument, that is to say, whether we can be sure that our 'will' or 'act' is not evil or pernicious to others. This 'Will' like his 'desire', as we have seen before, is selfish 'will'. It is based on passive and abstract memories. The priest does not work but only wills and receives.

Swedenborg believed that a man's 'act' is derived from his 'will' and 'understanding' and thus those in 'Heaven' and 'Hell' act according to their will and understanding. Men act well or badly by conjunction with 'Heaven' or conjunction with 'Hell'. These conjunctions are related to his 'will' and 'understanding', for from those principles the body acts. The driving love and affection of men determines their 'act' and place in 'Heaven' or 'Hell'. The Angels are in 'Heaven' because they desire, love and 'will' to be in 'Heaven'. They act according to their own 'will' and affection because:

'Man is of such a quality as his affection and thought are, or of such a quality as his love and faith

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1. H.H., p.291, no.358.



are; hence all his external acts drive their life, for  
to act is to will, and to speak is to think ...'<sup>1.</sup>

All this means that man is judged on his affection and thought. Swedenborg has even given his own interpretation to what is said about 'deed' in the Word. He believed that what is meant by the word 'deed' in the Bible is action derived from thought and affection.

'....since everyone acts from will and speaks from thought; therefore by what is said in the Word, that man shall be judged according to his deeds, and that he shall be recompensed according to his works, is understood that he shall be judged and recompensed according to his thought and affection, which give birth to his deeds ...'<sup>2.</sup>

When we examine Heaven and Hell closely we learn that what Swedenborg means by the words 'thought' and 'affection' on which man's 'will' and 'acts' are based are in fact his own memories formed by impressions of his early life and Church officials.<sup>3.</sup> This means that all his thought and affections are based on the limited principle of sense perception. Since these memories are only the product of his own background and are thus limited, therefore his 'thought', 'affection' and 'will' are also limited. In other words he can think and 'will' only from his own limited standpoint. He desires and wills only what he has already

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1. Ibid., p.291, no.358.

2. Ibid.

3. See, for instance, H.H. p.384, no.463 (All the things which have entered the memory, 'remain, and are never obliterated.').

seen or what is fixed in his mind. Since the priest's 'affection' and 'will' are based solely on his abstract memories rather than on active life his 'will' and 'act' might consequently be harmful to others. By his abstract memories and teachings the priest, as we have seen before, restrains and negates life in other people. The harm comes from his passive and selfish action. He lives upon his children. He puts his desire and 'will' before others and thus his 'act' is pernicious and his 'will' evil.

Blake opposed Swedenborg's doctrine of 'Will' and wrote in an annotation to Swedenborg's Divine Love and Divine Wisdom: 'There can be no Good Will. Will is always Evil; it is pernicious to others or suffering.'<sup>1.</sup> It is evil because it is based on passive and limited sense perception rather than on 'energy' or active life. The 'will' of <sup>a</sup>/priest is evil and his 'act' harmful because he puts his desire and 'will' before the interest and will <sup>the</sup> of/people.

Blake, on the contrary, looks at action from a practical and moral view point. There is a difference between creation and destruction. To create is an 'act' but to destroy is merely the 'negation' of <sup>an</sup>/act'. The priest who restrains his children bodily and mentally is not doing an 'act' but neglecting his duty. Blake in his annotations to Lavater has defined the word 'act':

'...all Act from individual propensity ..... is Virtue.

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1. Annotations to Swedenborg's ...Divine Love and Divine Wisdom. (K. ed.1969, p.89).

To hinder another is not an act; it is the contrary; it is a restraint on action both in ourselves and in the person hindered, for he who hinders another omits his own duty at the same time.

Murder is Hindering Another.

Theft is Hindering Another.

Backbiting, Undermining, Circumventing, and whatever  
 is Negative is Vico.<sup>1.</sup>

By the definition of the word 'act', Blake, however, has also defined the idea of 'negation'. To hinder another is not an 'act'; it is <sup>a</sup> 'negation' of <sup>an</sup> act or creation. In other words the 'negation' is the restraint of creation or progression in other people and omitting one's own duty at the same time. Thus 'negation' is hindering the 'act' of creation.

In the proverb, Blake is opposing the negative and selfish act of the priest when he writes: 'The most sublime act is to set another before you.' In other words, the moral values of everyman's 'act' must be recognised by his relationship with other people.

Swedenborg assumed himself to be an appointed prophet while he was in fact setting his selfish will before the interest of other people. Opposing the limited and selfish act of the priest, Blake says that if you want to be a

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1. Annotations to Lavater, (K. p.88).



prophetic character, then you ought to set others before you, in other words, you ought to be practically selfless and more humane.

4. 'The Cut Worm Forgives the Plow.'

The term 'worm' is used by Swedenborg and Blake in different ways. Swedenborg uses it only in the traditional sense. While discussing the time of the last judgment he writes:

'.....how can bodies eaten up by worms, consumed by putridity, and dispersed before every wind, be gathered together to their soul?' 1.

The term sometimes appears in Blake with a similar meaning to that of Swedenborg; for instance in The Book of Tiriel (1789) we come across statements such as: '.... thou shalt feel worms in thy marrow creeping thro' thy bones'.<sup>2</sup> Or, in the book of 'Visions of the Daughters of Albion' we also notice the statement: 'Ask the blind worm the secrets of the grave'.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless the term has a special symbolic meaning in Blake and is used throughout his writings.

Before examining the writings of Blake we must first discuss the proverb: 'The cut worm forgives the plow' in the context of Heaven and Hell. This proverb apparently

1. H.H., p.224, no.312.

2. Tiriel, Plate 6 (K. p.107).

3. Visions of the Daughters of Albion, plate 3, l.10. (K. p.191).

refers to the chapter in Heaven and Hell 'That man after death is in the enjoyment of all sense, memory, thought, and affection, in which he was in the world ....'<sup>1.</sup>

After leaving the natural body, man enters the spiritual body in which he is called a 'man-spirit'.<sup>2.</sup> A man-spirit enjoys every external and internal sense which he enjoyed in the world. He reflects, loves and wills as before. He also 'carries along with him all things which he possessed in himself as a man ...' also his 'natural memory for he retains all things whatsoever which he hath heard, seen, learned and thought, in the world, from earliest infancy even to the conclusions of life'.<sup>3.</sup> In other words man's desires and actions are based on the memories which are formed from his social environment. He is wrapped up in these memories. They are 'reproduced when it is well pleasing to the Lord'.<sup>4.</sup> When these memories are reproduced in the spiritual world man is in the state after death.

In this argument Swedenborg implies three things: first, that man's knowledge is based on the principle of sense perception; secondly, that the mind of man is passive, that is to say, it reflects 'whatsoever which he hath heard, seen, read, learned ... and thought, from earliest infancy ...;' and thirdly, that these memories are

1. H.H., p.378, no.461.
2. Ibid., p.379, no.461.
3. H.H., p.379, no.461.
4. Ibid.

reproduced only when it is 'well-pleasing to the Lord', or, in other words, that man has no control over the reproduction of these memories. The first two principles of Swedenborg's theory are apparently based on Locke's principle of sense perception. But Swedenborg seems to be adding another principle to the mechanical theory of sense perception in suggesting that reproduction depends on the Lord. By the term 'Lord' Blake means the 'Poetic Genius'<sup>1.</sup> or the creative mind but Swedenborg means a superhuman power or a sky God who looks down on and guides man. Through his third principle Swedenborg is trying to justify the position of Angels in 'Heaven'. This principle, combined with his principle of sense perception, in The Wisdom of Angels has led to the idea of 'predestination' concerning divine providence.

'Since every man ... lives after death to eternity, and according to his life here hath his place assigned to him either in heaven or in hell, and ....no one can occupy any other place in that form, but his own, it follows, that the human race throughout the whole world is under the auspices of the Lord, and that everyone, from his infancy even to the end of his life, is led of him in the most minute particulars, and his place foreseen, and at the same time provided.'

Blake, ironically comments on this passage that<sup>2.</sup>

'Devils and angels are predestined'.

In other words Swedenborg is, in fact, trying to say that

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1. See, for instance, Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love, (K. p.91).
  2. Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Providence, (K. p.132).



the social position of Angels in 'Heaven' and Devils in 'Hell' is assigned by a superhuman power or God. Blake disagrees with him.

For Swedenborg man's freedom depends on the reproduction of his memories in what Swedenborg calls the spiritual world. When this happens man leaves the natural body and enters the spiritual body and thus is free. Man longs for those things which have formed his memories, and dislikes what is contrary to his established memories and affections. Even Angels 'speak from affections and consequent thoughts, which are of their minds, wherefore they are incapable of uttering what doth not agree with those affections and thought'<sup>1</sup>.

When these memories are reproduced in the spiritual world man's thought processes are rational, for 'to think spiritually is to think intellectually or rationally'. Consequently for man to reproduce his memories he must cultivate his rational principle. By the rational or intellectual principle Swedenborg means the ability to separate those memories which agree with affection and love from those memories which are contrary to the dominant affections and thoughts. Thus the rational mind is 'like to a garden .... and likewise to ground newly ploughed'<sup>2</sup>. In other words, the agreeable memories are separated from

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1. H.E., p.387, no.464.  
 2. Ibid., p.388, no.464.

the disagreeable memories. It follows that those who disagree with the spiritual memories of Swedenborg have not 'cultivated' their rational principle. Their ideas are 'fallacies'.<sup>1.</sup> But this reproduction of memories or the principle of sense perception does not according to Blake lead to freedom of the creative mind. Man is still bound to a limited love or interest because sense perception is formed by impressions received from a limited social environment. Swedenborg can reproduce only his own limited memories or likes and dislikes. The principle is limited to the environment of every individual and therefore is limited and based on selfhood. As an alternative to this principle Blake suggests that the 'Poetic or Prophetic Genius' or the creative mind can see human society as a unity rather than a series of fragments. With regard to human understanding or consciousness the 'Poetic Genius' or the creative mind is at a higher moral level than that of sense perception. The 'Poetic Genius' is in every man and is, contrary to the principle of memory, unchangeable. We shall discuss 'Poetic Genius' in Chapter Five in detail.

Limited memories bind the creative mind and stop creation as the 'worm' stops the growth of plants; on the other hand, elimination or annihilation of these limited memories 'forgives' and frees the creative mind. Limited memories 'negate' creation in two ways, on an individual

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1. Ibid.



level and on a social level. On an individual level the creative mind becomes the victim of the limited memories of an individual; in other words the individual is ruled only by his own limited memories. For instance in Swedenborg his memories are the only source of his knowledge. He bases his values in life on these memories and judges others' action according to them. And thus his mind is fixed to certain limited impressions and his creative mind is 'set in repose'. On the social level a whole people become the victim of the self-interest and fixed mentality of the priest. Those who agree with the limited impressions of Swedenborg have cultivated their rational principle and are spiritual, but those who do not agree have not 'cultivated' their rational principle and are not spiritual and are thus in 'Hell'.

So the priest attempts to form the mind and personality of other people in his own likeness based on his own abstract memories or selfhood. Blake likens the head formed by these memories to a 'reptile form' and man in his fallen state, such as Tiriel, is like a "worm of sixty winters":

'Why men bound beneath the heavens in a reptile form,  
A worm of sixty winters creeping on the dusky ground?  
The child springs from the womb; the father ready to form  
The infant head, ...' 1.

The priest is not only himself a fallen man but he causes the fall of others too. When the child is born into his society, the priest moulds the child's mind by negative and

1. Tiriel, (K. p110).



abstract teachings and thus keeps the creative mind undeveloped.

The 'worm' or selfhood thus dwells both in the ground of the creative mind or 'imagination' as limited memories, and in the context of society as the passive and 'devouring' being against people: 'As the caterpillar chooses the fairest leaves to lay her eggs on, so the priest lays his curse on the fairest joys.'<sup>1.</sup> In order that the ground may be planted the worm embedded in the soil must be dug out or cut. Or, in other words, for man's creative energy to be free he must cut the passive and abstract teachings of the priest by recognition of the active and creative 'energy' in man. In Part II of the thesis we shall, however, attempt to demonstrate that the 'worm' symbol is one which is of a special importance in Blake and is used all through his writings as a social character or personality. It becomes either/<sup>a</sup> passive and devouring being or a creative and prolific personality according to its position and relationship to other beings. We shall show this particularly by means of the designs: For The Sexes: The Gates of Paradise.

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1. 'Proverbs of Hell', Plate 8, (K. p.152).

CHAPTER IVLAW AND RELIGION

1. 'Prisons are built with stones of Law.'<sup>1.</sup>

A cursory study of Blake's work might lead one to the mistaken idea that he was against law and religion. Blake did not condemn law as such, but opposed unjust and inhuman laws such as those which Swedenborg presents in his Heaven and Hell. Nor did Blake condemn religion as such, but opposed the negative attitude of the priest who uses religion for his own end and against the interest of the people.

The laws of the priest Swedenborg are inhuman because the whole doctrine of Heaven and Hell is essentially based on an unjust and cruel law. The priest and his God sit as punishers above in 'Heaven' while the people live in fear of punishment in 'Hell'. Those in 'Heaven' make laws against those in 'Hell' according to their likes and dislikes. The social relationship is thus based on a selfish love and the laws are accordingly based on selfhood. Selfish love is that which seeks only its own interest, as does that of the priest.

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1. 'Proverbs of Hell', Plate 8, (K. p.151).

In the Songs of Experience Blake clearly differentiates between selfish and selfless love:

"Love seeketh not itself to please,  
Nor for itself hath any care,  
But for another gives its ease,  
And builds a Heaven in Hell's despair."

"So sang a little Clod of Clay  
Trodden with the cattle's feet,  
But a Pebble of the brook  
Warbled out these metres meet:

"Love seeketh only Self to please,  
To bind another to its delight,  
Joys in another's loss of ease,  
And builds a Hell in Heaven's despite." 1.

The 'clod of clay' is a symbol of gentle humility and selflessness, while 'the pebble of the brook' represents stony selfhood. The 'clod' is selfless because it does not set out to please itself but seeks its own love in the pleasure of others. It is 'trodden with the cattle's feet' yet is happy and sings the songs of love. True and selfless love puts other's pleasure before its own.

The 'pebble of the brook' is a symbol of selfhood because it is hard-hearted and passive in its position. It seeks only 'self to please'. It is like the priest who only desires joy and delight for himself while living an idle and solitary life. The pebble has a hard shell round it as a defence against the current of water and similarly the priest has abstract moral laws to protect his 'selfhood' and builds his 'Heaven' by fear of the laws of punishment.

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1. Songs of Experience (K. p.211).



Swedenborg's 'Hell' is a prison in which he casts all his opponents and those who do harsh 'menial' work such as coal mining. This prison is made by the 'stones of law'; the law that is based on the selfish love of the priest. Like the 'pebble of the brook', the stones represent cold, hardness and death. These are the characteristics of the priest-made laws. His laws are as hard and heartless as a stone, and as dark as the interior of a prison; they are the laws of 'Urizen' who is the God of the priest but 'Unknown, abstracted, brooding, secret, the dark power hid'.<sup>1.</sup>

The priest Swedenborg puts his laws into practice through the power which he links only with the angels in 'Heaven': 'There is all power in heaven, and none in hell'.<sup>2.</sup> But the priest's power is as dark as his laws. In the Book of Urizen Blake speaks of: 'The primeval priest's assum'd power, when Eternals spurn'd back his religion and gave him a place in the north, obscure, shadowy, void, solitary'.<sup>3.</sup>

Swedenborg and the angels have this 'assum'd power', derived according to Swedenborg, from the truth and good of 'Heaven', for 'everyone in heaven is principled in truths derived from good' ... but everyone in 'Hell' is principled in falses derived from evil'.<sup>4.</sup> Thus the latter

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1. The First Book of Urizen, (K. Chapter I, p.222).
  2. H.H., p.469, no.539.
  3. Ibid., The First Book of Urizen.
  4. Ibid., p.469, no.539.

are ruled by the 'general afflux of divine good and divine truth from heavens'.<sup>1.</sup> The angels 'look into the hells, and ... restrain the insanities' there. These 'insanities'<sup>2.</sup> are love of self and of the world. Thus the priest Swedenborg who seeks joy and ease without pain and work, decrees his abstract laws of peace, love and pity. But such laws are based on 'negation'; they negate love.

Swedenborg in his chapter 'Concerning the State of Peace in Heaven' states that there are two inmost principles in heaven: innocence and peace. They 'proceed immediately from the Lord: innocence is that principle from which is derived every good of heaven, and peace is that principle from which is derived all the delights of good'...<sup>3.</sup>

Only the angels in 'Heaven' live in 'peace' and innocence because they have risen above the physical level of life.

'In order to perceive the peace of heaven, a man ought to be ... withdrawn from the body'.<sup>4.</sup>

Swedenborg then notes that it is not enough to

'rest of mind, and tranquility ... arising from the removal of care'

to perceive the peace of heaven. It only comes

'with those who are principled in heavenly good, ... inasmuch as peace flows in from the Lord into their inmost principle ...' <sup>5.</sup>

1. Ibid., p.471, no.543.
2. Ibid., p.471, no.543.
3. H.H., p.215, no.285.
4. Ibid., p.215, no.284.
5. Ibid., p.208, no.278.

Those in a state of innocence love everything which is good but

'consider themselves only as receivers, and ascribe all things to the Lord'. 1.

Those in 'Hell' cannot be in 'innocence' and 'peace' because they are not in love with the Lord and willing to be led by Him, and thus are not in 'Heaven'. They are in love with the 'self' and do not want to be led by another:

'all who are in heaven are in innocence, for all who are there love to be led by the Lord, for they know that to lead themselves is to be led by the proprium ....and the proprium consists in loving self, and he who loves himself doth not suffer himself to be led by another'. 2.

He states categorically elsewhere:

'they who are in hell are altogether contrary to innocence, nor do they know what innocence is'. 3.

The mine-owner and priest Swedenborg denies that those who work and live in 'Hell' (or the mines) are innocent; but those who live amid the abundance of 'Heaven' and dislike the active life are innocent because they do not love the 'self'. They love the Lord and thus receive his gifts 'gratis'. And then they become the objects of attack by those in 'Hell' who

'are of such a quality, that in proportion they burn with a desire to do him mischief'. 4.

Blake criticises Swedenborg's suspicion of the people and his condemnation of those who do not 'suffer' themselves

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1. Ibid., p.208, no.278.
  2. Ibid., p.210, no.280.
  3. Ibid., p.214, no.283.
  4. Ibid., p.214, no.283.



to be led, and comments:

'He who has suffer'd you to impose on him knows you'.

In other words, before letting oneself be led by another person one must first trust and understand the other person. People do not refuse to suffer themselves to be led by the priest Swedenborg without reason. The reason must be the wicked and unjust attitude of the father towards his children.

Swedenborg enlarges on the attitude of those in 'Hell' towards those in 'Heaven' who have the monopoly of 'peace' and 'innocence'. The former seem 'inflamed with a cruel<sup>1.</sup> lust to hurt' the angels. To protect the innocent ones and preserve 'peace' in 'Heaven' in the face of opposition from 'Hell' the angels use the laws of restraint through fear of punishment. At the end of the chapter 'Concerning the state of peace in Heaven', Swedenborg condemns the vengeful attitude of those in 'Hell' towards those in 'Heaven' and says that violence occurs in 'Hell' when its inhabitants are unrestrained by fear. The evil ones in 'Hell':

'burn with enmities, hatreds, revenge, cruelty ... in which ... their mind ... indulges itself, as soon as they see anyone who doth not favour them, and thus bursts forth into open violence when unrestrained by fear; and that hence it comes to pass that their delight dwells in insanity, whilst the delight of those who are in principled in good dwells in wisdom; the difference is like what subsists between hell and heaven'. 2.

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1. Ibid., p.214, no. 283.
  2. Ibid., p.221, no.290.

1.

The proverb 'A dead body revenges not injuries' refers to the chapter about peace and the idea of 'revenge' seems to be derived from the preceding passage. Blake challenges the unjust and selfish attitude of Swedenborg. In a society where the good things of life and all intellectual gifts are the sole property of those in 'Heaven', while the honest toil of those in 'Hell' are condemned as the love of self and of the world, where the father who is supposed to be the shepherd and loving guide and protector of his children, instead lives upon them and accuses them of harbouring hatred and revenge; where he has allocated the conditions of innocence and peace for himself and put his heavenly delight and interest before his children's ease: in this society and with this unjust relationship, the resulting feelings of enmity and revenge in the children is understandable and justified. The beings in Swedenborg's 'Hell' are living people, and thus react against their injuries; they would only accept them if they were passive or dead: 'A dead body revenges not injuries'.

The same point is perhaps made in The Songs of Experience where the child bitterly comments on the wicked hypocritical father who escapes from his human and social responsibility and despises man's gifts. He instead praises 'God' and the priest who have built a 'Heaven' on the misery of the children. The chimney-sweeper's parents

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1. 'Proverbs of Hell'. Plate 7, 1.16 (K. p.151).

have gone to church leaving their child to work and in need of care and attention. They are, like Swedenborg, in love with 'God' in 'heaven' rather than with His children on earth:

'A little black thing among the snow,  
Crying "weep"! "weep"! in notes of woe!  
"Where are thy father & mother? say?"  
"They are both gone up to the church to pray..."'

"They think they have done me no injury,  
"And are gone to praise God & his Priest & King,  
"Who make up a heaven of our misery." 1.

The 'Heaven' of the Swedenborg is, indeed, this sort of 'Heaven' where the Angels live in joy, innocence and peace with the Lord, while their children live in restraint and poverty.

And it is this 'Heaven' and this sort of society and its moral laws that Blake wholeheartedly opposes in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. Both children and father, he says, can live in innocence and peace.

Swedenborg has drawn on the teachings of Jesus to support his arguments. He states that the Lord is the source of peace:

'Jesus said PEACE I leave with you,  
My PEACE I give unto you .... John XIV 27'. 2.

Blake defends Jesus from being used as a support for Swedenborg's unjust doctrine, and thus writes:

'Jesus Christ did not wish to unite, but to seporate them, as in the parable of sheep and goats! & he says: "I came not to send Peace, but a Sword."' 3.

1. Songs of Experience, (K. p.212).
2. H.H., pp.216-7, no.287.
3. M.H.H., Plates 15-17. (K. p.155).



According to Blake, Jesus did not want an uneasy and unjust peace by siding with the cruel religious and social leaders of the time and following their rules. He instead wished to free the people from fear and oppression as the shepherd frees the flock from fear of the wolf. Unlike the priest, Jesus put the people before Himself:

'the most sublime act is to set another before you.' 1.

The priest, while preaching love, seeks only to please his selfhood and builds his 'Heaven' on the fear of punitive laws. In 'Hell' the laws of punishment are 'manifold', for

'fear of punishment is the only medium to restrain the violence and fury of those who are in the hells'. 2.

Thus the only relationship between 'Heaven' and 'Hell' is based on punishment, on the laws of negation rather than of love. Love unites man with his fellow-creatures, but the laws of negation divide them and make a separate 'Heaven' and 'Hell'. It is the priest's art to divide and rule people only by fear of punishment. And the civil law follows his lead for, again the

'laws in the world prescribe punishment for every evil'. 3.

Swedenborg says that

'God is good itself, love itself, and mercy itself'; ... 'God never turns himself away from man' 4.

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2. H.H., p.471, no.543.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Ibid., p.477, no.550.
  5. Ibid., p.473, no.545.

but at the time of conflict between the Angels in 'Heaven' and the people in 'Hell' God sides with the Angels. The Lord prescribes and permits these torments.<sup>1</sup> The Lord seems to speak with the same voice that we hear in The Book of Urizen (1794). 'Urizen', after discovering the 'secrets of wisdom', issues his decrees:

"Lo! I unfold my darkness, and on  
 "This rock place with strong hand the Book  
 "Of eternal brass, written in my solitude:"

"Laws of peace, of love, of unity,  
 "Of pity, compassion, forgiveness;  
 "Let each chuse one habitation,  
 "His ancient infinite mansion,  
 "One command, one joy, one desire,  
 "One curse, one weight, one measure,  
 "One King, one God, one Law." 2.

These are Urizen's self-begotten laws, written in the book of 'eternal brass'. 'Rock' and 'brass' are symbols of their dead and limited character. They turn over and over again like millstones. They are, moreover, formed by the memory of the priest. Swedenborg, as we have earlier noted, sees and loves things only from one standpoint and wants to rectify people according to his natural memories formed by his early impressions. And thus he makes his laws. They are tools in the hands of the angels in 'Heaven' used to restrain those in 'Hell' through punishment and fear. Blake accordingly censures them, declaring

'Prisons are built with the stones of law'.

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1. Ibid., p.505, no.581.

2. The First Book of Urizen, Chapter II, para. 8. (K. p.224).

'Heaven' has its laws and government also, but vastly different from those in 'Hell'. They are, for a start, based on justice because

'all the inhabitants are principled in the good of love to the Lord from the Lord, and what is done from that good is called just'. 1.

It follows that the justice is only exclusive for the community of Angels in 'Heaven'. The government is in the hands of the Lord who directs the Angels:

'He leads and teaches them in affairs of life: truths, which are called truths of judgement, are inscribed on their hearts'. 2.

Everyone knows these truths and so

'matters of judgement never come into dispute there'. 3.

The less wise interrogate the more wise on matters related to life and the more wise, in turn interrogate the Lord<sup>4</sup> 'and receive answers'. Thus the Angels learn about truth and judgement.

Governors administer

'all things according to the law; they understand those laws because they are wise, and in doubtful cases they are enlightened by the Lord'. 5.

They are, of course, never punitive, because their laws are based on mutual love.

And so in 'Hell' the government rests on restraint and fear of punishment; in 'Heaven' it rests on justice

1. H.E., p.157, no.214.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p.158, no.215.



and mutual love. In 'Hell' the love of self and of the world is evil because it stems from the external world; in 'Heaven' it is not evil, because all love comes from the Lord. There is thus one law which is made only by those who are in 'Heaven'. In other words the law is made only from the standpoint of those in 'Heaven'. To Blake this is unjust and he writes:

'One law for the Lion & Ox is oppression'.

One law for those who are in 'Heaven' and the same law for those who are in 'Hell' regarding the rigid relationship and gulf which exists between them is oppression.

If there were an equal law for 'Heaven' and for 'Hell', the priest would cease to have unlimited power and riches. 'The wrath of the lion is the wisdom of God' and is beautiful, but if the lion uses this wisdom for his own ends, it becomes ugly and destructive. The lion has power, but, unlike the priest, does not misuse it. Power misused is immoral because it imposes its will on others. This can occur only in a society divided into 'Heaven' and 'Hell' in which one law, representing only the view point of those in 'Heaven' governs.

The different characteristics of the lion, tiger or ox can only be fully appreciated and given proper recognition in an equal condition rather than <sup>under</sup> abstract laws of equality. The wrath of the lion and the tiger which are products of unjust and unequal laws, such as those of Swedenborg, seem like the head of Leviathan which appears

enormous but is weak and earthbound. The lion, King of the jungle, lives on the results of his own energy not on that of others; the priest imagines himself as powerful and wise in 'Heaven', yet lives upon the work of others.

The governors of 'Heaven' are full of wisdom and love towards their fellow creatures. They do not make themselves

'greater than others, but lesser; for they set the good of society and of their neighbours in the prior place'. 1.

Swedenborg approves this attitude but does not himself set the good of society 'in the prior place'. In support of his arguments he quotes Jesus who said to his disciples:

'Whosoever would be the greatest amongst you, let him be your minister, and whosoever would be first amongst you, let him be your servant' (Matt. XX 27,28).

And again,

'He that is the greatest amongst you, let him be as the least' (Luke xxii 26).

But to Swedenborg, greater wisdom is synonymous with great wealth. The governors, despite their love and wisdom,

'enjoy honour and glory; they dwell in the midst of the society, in situations elevated above others, and likewise in magnificent palaces',...

These are the symbols of their office, given to them by the Lord. Swedenborg's Lord, unlike the God of Jesus, seems to be selfish and harsh. Defending the position of Jesus against the unjust laws of the priest and his God, Blake, in The Marriage turns the laws of Swedenborg

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1. Ibid., p.161, no.218.

upside down and dismisses them, as Jesus did with the punitive 'laws' of ten commandments. Blake censures the priest, saying that if he really loved Jesus and considered Him the greater one then he should copy Jesus' actions. Jesus condemned moral laws similar to those of the Angel Swedenborg.

'Once I saw a Devil in a flame of fire, who arose before an Angel that sat on a cloud, and the Devil utter'd these words: "The worship of God is: Honouring his gifts in other men, each according to his genius, and loving the greatest men best: those who envy or calumniate great men hate God; for there is no other God."'

The Angel hearing this became almost blue; but mastering himself he grew yellow, and at last white, pink, and smiling, and then replied:

"Thou Idolater! is not God One? & is not he visible in Jesus Christ? and has not Jesus Christ given his sanction to the law of ten commandments? and are not all other men fools, sinners, & nothings?" 1.

The priest groups himself and his allies with the Angels, and his opponents with the Devils, and, as Blake opposes him, he must be called a 'Devil'. The coal-miners  
2.  
who live in infernal fire are also called Devils.

'The Devil answer'd: "bray a fool in a mortar with wheat, yet shall not his folly be beaten out of him; if Jesus Christ is the greatest man, you ought to love him in the greatest degree; now hear how he has given his sanction to the law of ten commandments: did he not mock at the sabbath, and so mock the sabbath's God? murder those who were murder'd

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1. M.H.H., Plates 22-24, (K. p.158).  
2. H.H., pp.471-2, no.544



because of him? turn away the law from the woman taken in adultery? steal the labor of others to support him? bear false witness when he omitted making a defence before Pilate? covet when he pray'd for his disciples, and when he bid them shake off the dust of their feet against such as refused to lodge them? I tell you, no virtue can exist without breaking these ten commandments. Jesus was all virtue, and acted from impulse, not from rules." 1.

Opposing the static rules of the priest, Jesus Christ sided with the oppressed people of his time. He was too dynamic and creative to be enslaved by the unjust and passive laws of the priest. He was impulsive because he depended on his own genius and active energy rather than on the abstract rules of the priest.

## 2. 'Brothels Are Built With Bricks of Religion'.

Blake, as we have mentioned in the preceding part, did not condemn religion as such, but merely that of the priest, such as Swedenborg, which is based on abstract and negative teaching; abstract because it is neither relevant to nor effective in everyday life, and negative because it is based on injustice and the laws of restraint. This religion not only fails to fulfil its social and human responsibilities but also hinders and binds most of its adherents by its selfish attitude. Religion negates and law punishes; one teaches virginity, the other rapes. Both religion and law are in the hands of the angels in 'Heaven' who rule those in 'Hell' by these tools. Religion rules

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1. M.H.H., Plates 22-24, (K. p.158).

the mind and law the body.

E.D. Hirsch in his recent book Innocence and Experience: An Introduction to Blake has suggested that Blake

'like Swedenborg had given marriage a profound sacramental significance'. 1.

But a closer examination of Swedenborg might reveal the case quite opposite to the opinion of Mr. Hirsch. In other words Blake did not share Swedenborg's beliefs about marriage. The criticism of this part of the proverb seems to be the chapter 'Concerning Marriage in Heaven' and 'brothels' in 'Hell'. In this chapter Swedenborg discusses conjugal love and condemns adulteries as opposed to the delight of heavenly marriage.

There are two kinds of marriages, those of 'Heaven' and those of the earth. The former is the conjunction of man and woman into one mind. The mind consists of two parts, understanding and will. When these two parts act in unity, they are called one mind. In this united mind the husband

'acts that part which is called understanding, and the wife that which is called will.' 2.

This is the conjunction of the interiors. When it descends to the exterior 'principles', which are bodily, it is perceived and felt as love, which is 'conjugal love'. 3.

Thus conjugal love is derived from the 'conjunction of two into one mind'. The two conjugal partners in 'Heaven' are called one angel.

1. E.D. Hirsch. Innocence and Experience. An Introduction to Blake. (Yale University Press, 1964), p.68.
2. Heaven & Hell, p.302, no.367.
3. Ibid., p.302, no.367.



In this conjunction of man and woman or understanding and will into one mind, Swedenborg considers the man as superior to woman. Although they are united in one mind, the wife ought to follow her husband for he is

'born to be intellectual, thus to think from intellect, but the woman is born to be voluntary'.

Man acts from 'reason, but the woman from affection'.<sup>1.</sup>

Understanding and will, thought and affection are dissimilar as the form of man and woman are dissimilar. The body of a person reflects his or her mind for the

'body is an effigy of the mind, because formed to be a resemblance of it'.<sup>2.</sup>

Consequently the man has

'a harsher and less beautiful countenance, a deeper tone of speech, and a more robust body, but the woman has a softer and more beautiful countenance, a tone of voice more tender, and a body more delicate'.<sup>3.</sup>

Blake was perhaps satirising this description of man when he wrote the proverb:

'Let man wear the fell of the lion, woman the fleece of the sheep'. Opposing the priest's passive life, Blake suggests that if man is born to be intellectual and has a stronger body, then he ought to be more active in the practical life.

The main condition that leads to conjugal love is, as we have already noted, the conjunction of two minds into one. Another condition is that the beings concerned must live in 'divine good and divine truths', that is to say, in 'Heaven'. The divine good and truth in 'Heaven' spring

1. Ibid., p.303, no.368.

2. Ibid., p.307, no.373.

3. Ibid., p.303, no.368.



from the Lord and thus

'no one can be in love truly conjugal unless he acknowledges the Lord, and His Divine (Principle), for without that acknowledgement the Lord cannot flow in, and be conjoined to the truths appertaining to man.' 1.

Neither can conjugal love occur between those of a different religion because

'two dissimilar and discordant principles cannot make one mind out of two'. 2.

Because people with different religions are dissimilar

'the origin of their love doth not partake at all of what is spiritual; if they cohabit and agree together, it is only from natural causes'. 3.

For this reason Swedenborg also disapproves of marriage between those in 'Heaven' and those in 'Hell'. The former acknowledge the Lord, while the latter acknowledge 'Energy'. Those in 'Heaven' have their own exclusive society with one religion. Marriages in 'Heaven' are 'contracted with those who are within a society, because they are in similar good and truth, but not with those who are out of the society: all who are there, within a society, are in similar good and truth, and differ from those who are without'... 4.

Hence

'every society of heaven consists of those who are of similar dispositions; similar are presented to similar'. 5.

1. Ibid., p.309, no.376.
2. Ibid., p.310, no.378.
3. Ibid., p.310, no.378.
4. Ibid., p.310, no.378.
5. Ibid., p.316, no.385.

Opposing the priest's act of division, Blake marries 'Heaven' and 'Hell' both in body and mind. This marriage must take place within society. The title of the chapter 'Concerning Marriage in Heaven' is perhaps used for phrasing the title of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.

Swedenborg says that only those in 'Heaven' can live in true conjugal love and have a 'heavenly' marriage. Union between those who are false and evil is called an infernal marriage, based only on physical lust:

'It hath been given me to see what is the quality of marriage between those who are in the falses of evil, which is called the infernal marriage; they discourse with each other, and likewise are conjoined from a lascivious principle ...' 1.

Earthly marriages differ from those made in 'Heaven' in that they are not based on the conjunction of good and truth and therefore are not principled in conjugal love. They are based on natural causes and their only aim is natural, the procreation of children, whereas heavenly marriages are 'spiritual'. Earthly marriages conceive children, heavenly marriages exist for the

'procreation of good and of truth'. 2.

In 'Heaven' by nativities and

'generations ... are signified spiritual nativities and generations, which are of good and of truth, by a mother and father truth conjoined to good which procreates, by sons and daughters the truths and goods which are procreated' ... 3.

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1. Ibid., pp.309-310, no.377.
  2. Ibid., p.314, no.382.
  3. Ibid., p.315, no.382.

Earthly nuptials are those of 'the flesh' but<sup>1.</sup> heavenly nuptials are 'spiritual' and thus in 'Heaven' the man and woman are not called husband and wife but the conjugal partner of each other because their union is the conjunction of two minds. Swedenborg's whole concept of conjugal love seems to be that of an idealised spiritual relationship between man and woman, far removed from the sordid flesh. He separates this ideal union from family responsibility by confining the aim of procreation of children only to the inferior earthly marriages. Thus marriage, which ought to be a social act with responsibility to society, is limited to a spiritual 'conjunction of two minds into one' and bodily union is degraded.

Earthly marriages can be holy if they are based on love of the Lord and His divine laws; otherwise they are contrary to conjugal love and are adulteries,

'contrary to divine laws, and contrary to the civil laws of all Kingdoms'. 2.

These divine laws are, as we have seen before none other than the negative laws of the priest who, for example, denies conjugal love to those from a different background or who have a different religion. Unions between those who fail to acknowledge the priest's Lord and his church

1. Ibid., p.315, no.382.

2. Ibid., p.317, no.384.



are termed adulteries.

And apart from these restrictions, the priest Swedenborg sweepingly rejects all partnerships in 'Hell' as 'adulteries'. Those in 'Hell' can never live in conjugal love because their ruling desires are love of the self, destruction of good and truth, and violation of the 'Divine (Being or Principle)' in 'Heaven'. Swedenborg states

'that all who are in hell are in opposition to conjugal love, hath been given me to perceive from the sphere thence exhaling, ... that the ruling delight in hell is the delight of adultery, and that the delight of adultery is likewise the delight of destroying the conjunction of good and truth, which conjunction makes heaven ...' 1.

Swedenborg is horrified to find that

'In some of the hells there are mere brothels which are disgusting to the sight, filled with every kind of filth and excrement'. 2.

The people in 'Hell'

'pass their time in brothels, ... loving such habitations ... nothing is more delightful to them than to break the bonds of marriage'. 3.

Blake reacts to the negative marriage laws of the priest with the comment: 'Brothels' are built 'with bricks of Religion'. This 'Religion' is that of the priest and the bricks are his negative moral laws. By his religion the priest chains both body and mind. Those who cannot

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1. Ibid., p.317, no.384.
  2. Ibid., p.510, no.586.
  3. Ibid., p.416, no.489.

satisfy the requirements of his marriage laws must either restrain their desire or gratify it in brothels. In the divided and insecure society of Swedenborg where 'Heaven' lives upon 'Hell' and where people are reduced to poverty by the selfish desires of the Angels in 'Heaven' the only means of income which seem open to wretched and hopeless women is the brothels. And these latter flourish where hypocrisy degrades and limits physical enjoyment. The 'youthful Harlot's curse'<sup>1.</sup> and the 'new born infant's tear' in 'London', poem of the Songs of Experience, are, as we have noted in the introductory chapter, the result of such inhuman social relationships.

### 3. 'And All Must Love the Human Form.'

Reaction against the priest's Religion and his marriage laws can be found elsewhere in Blake. Blake had perhaps personal experience of or had witnessed at first hand these religious bonds. In his time, worldly riches and social position played an important part in marriage arrangements. Blake had no wealth nor did he hold any supposedly respectable social position. Consequently a conventionally 'good' marriage was out of his reach; yet the success of his own marriage<sup>2.</sup> with a girl from humble origins might have taught him that it is possible to achieve a 'true' union although in 'Hell'.

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1. Songs of Experience, (K. p.216).

2. See, for instance, Mona Wilson The Life of William Blake (London 1948), p.16.

When Blake attacks the church and its marriages he is, in fact, attacking the unjust social relationship inspired by the religion of the day. In the 'Poems From the Note-Book (1793)' under the title of 'An Ancient Proverb' he writes:

'Remove away that black'ning church:  
 Remove away that marriage hearse:  
 Remove away that [place] man of blood: 1.  
 ['Twill ...] You'll quite remove the ancient curse'.

Swedenborg's church is the 'black'ning church' and the marriage which is based on its negative laws is the 'hearse', a vessel of death and burial, rather than a blessing and the start of a fruitful unity. The priest sets man against man, 'Heaven' against 'Hell', and creates division and war by his unjust laws. In order that society may be based on a just and human relationship, such 'Heaven' should be abolished:

'Remove away that man of blood'.

If we look at the psychological side of the matter a religion like that of Swedenborg, perhaps, creates brothels for the following reasons:

(a) The priest says that ideal marriage should be spiritual and above the physical level which is looked on as degraded and shameful. Therefore the man and woman look on the physical side of marriage as something shameful. They are afraid to seek physical enjoyment with each other because they will seem inferior beings and not good and religious. They cannot acknowledge their physical needs to each other because the priest condemns it as lust.

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1. Poems from the Note-Book, Poem no.33 (K. p.176).



(b) The wife becomes frigid and the man is forced either to repress himself or satisfy his physical needs outside marriage in brothels.

(c) Thus brothels mainly spring from religious and social repression and cause hypocrisy. By degrading the physical side of marriage it hypocritically forces man to the brothels. Perhaps Blake's poem of 'The Marriage Ring' might be understandable against the negative attitude of the priest towards physical love and against his 'heavenly' or ideal marriage:

'In a wife I would desire  
What in whores is always found -  
The lineaments of Gratified desire'.

When the physical level of marriage is considered infernal by the priest then man is forced to seek in a whore what he cannot find in a wife. Again Blake in his poem 'The Question Answer'd' wrote:

'What is it men [of del.] in women do desire?  
The lineaments of Gratified Desire  
What is it women do [of del.] in men require?  
The lineaments of Gratified Desire'. 1.

And when Blake talks of 'free love':

"Break this heavy chain  
"That does freeze my bones around.  
"Selfish! Vain!  
"Eternal bane!  
"That free love with bondage bound". 2.

he intends to mean more freedom of society from the negative

1. Ibid., p.180.
2. Songs of Experience (K. p.211).

laws and repressive religion or freedom from psychological bounds resulting from this religion than suggesting extra marital sexual relationship. By this freedom man, perhaps, can gratify his desire without the fear and sense of guilt and thus progress to a higher level of understanding. The priest, by his negative attitude to physical love and love of the world, not only restrains the bodily desire but he also restrains the mind from intellectual development. In other words physical love in marriage is necessary for the creation of spiritual or inner unity in each partner. Therefore by opposing <sup>the</sup> church and its marriage Blake in fact opposes the negative and 'heavenly' or the 'sacramental marriage' of the priest like Swedenborg.

Thus Mr. Hirsch seems wrong in his assertion that Blake

'like Swedenborg had given marriage a profound significance ...'

It seems unlikely that Blake believes in such 'sacramental marriage' of Swedenborg, which is based on rigid class barriers and negative rules.

Blake opposes the priest's religion and his Urizenic God. The art of the Urizenic religion is to bind and catch its prey by hypocrisy and cunning. The priest, as we have already noted, catches his food like a spider, by a net or a trap, Blake calls this net 'The Net of Religion' or the 'Net of Urizen'.<sup>1</sup>

'So twisted the cords, & so knotted  
The meshes, twisted like to the human brain.  
And all call'd it the Net of Religion'. 2.

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1. The First Book of Urizen, plate 8, 1.13.(K. p.236).
  2. Ibid., p.235.

In the Marriage of Heaven and Hell Blake criticizes Swedenborg's religion:

Swedenborg 'shews the folly of churches', he writes, '& exposes hypocrites, till he imagines that all are religious, & himself the single one on earth that ever broke a net'. 1.

Blake has a different set of Christian values to those of the priest. To Blake, indeed, the latter's attitude towards his fellow creatures seems quite opposite to true Christian philosophy and the teachings of Christ. Blake sides rather with humanists, like Lavater, who approached religion from a practical and human viewpoint. These thinkers opposed the passive and dogmatic teaching of the priest and attempted to find a uniting ground for all human beings by eliminating discrimination against any man because of his race or creed: In his Annotations to Lavater's Aphorisms on Man, as we have pointed out in the first chapter, Blake comments on Lavater's opinions of mankind. Lavater writes:

'Know, in the first place, that mankind agree in essence, as they do in their limbs and senses'.  
'Mankind differ as much in essence as they do in form, limbs and senses' - and only so, and not more'.

Blake wrote:

'This is true Christian philosophy far above all abstraction'. 2.

This 'abstraction' is the passive teachings of the priest

1. M.H.H., (K. p.157).
2. Annotations to Lavater, Aphorism no.2. (K.p.65).



who does not practise what he preaches, advocating self-denial, for example, while living in ease and amid wealth himself and whose words are thus abstract and devoid of practical use.

The poem 'The Human Abstract' in the Songs of Experience suggests the social conditions created by the unjust and selfish relationship between the priest in 'Heaven' and those in 'Hell'. The priest makes people poor by supporting and living off a system which creates unequal material wealth and then teaches hypocritical 'pity' and 'mercy' by means of charity. Blake exposes and scorns this system. He punishes people with one hand and offers mercy with the other. His 'pity', 'mercy' and 'peace' are mere empty words:

'Pity would be no more  
If we did not make somebody Poor;  
And Mercy no more could be  
If all were as happy as we.

And mutual fear brings peace,  
Till the selfish loves increase;  
Then Cruelty knits a snare,  
And spreads his baits with care'.

'Heavenly' peace is, as we have seen before, based on the laws of fear and punishment inflicted on those in 'Hell'. And these are abstract laws of the priest who rules by his negative religion.

'He sits down with holy fears,  
And waters the ground with Tears,  
Then Humility takes its root  
Underneath his foot'.

The priest's God is a mystery because nobody knows

about him. He exists only in the mind of the priest who deliberately sets out to mystify the people and thus keep them under his control through fear and awe:

'Soon spreads the dismal shade  
Of mystery over his head;  
And the Catterpillar and Fly  
Feed on the Mystery. 1.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,  
Ruddy and sweet to eat;  
And the Raven his nest has made  
In its thickest shade.

The God of the Earth and sea  
Sought thro' Nature to find this Tree;  
But their search was all in vain:  
There grows one in the Human Brain.1.

Swedenborg's religion, as we have noted, was the product of his passive memories formed by his background and upbringing. He feeds on his memories and the religion of Mystery. The priest is like the caterpillar and fly which feed on other things. The priest feeds on Mystery, on the things which are abstract and are the product of his passive mind. He spins mysteries out of commonplace events to bewilder and ensnare the people. Abstractions and 'Mystery' are the same things. 'Abstract ideas', said Professor Frye, 'are called spectres by Blake, and Spectre<sup>2</sup> with a capital letter is the Selfhood'. Thus the priest is wrapped up in his own abstract ideas or selfhood. The 'Holy Thursday', 'Chimney Sweeper', 'Little Vagabond' and

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1. Songs of Experience, (K. p.217).

2. N. Frye, op. cit., p.73.



'London' poems in the Songs of Experience are, for example, criticisms of the unjust social relationship which the priest has created. We do not, however, intend to discuss these poems, for our purpose, here, is just to show briefly the kind of religion that Blake opposed and the one he favoured.

Blake recognises the true Christian philosophy as expressed in a practical and social relationship. Lavater wrote:

'The purest religion is the most refined Epicurism. He, who in the smallest given time can enjoy most of what he never shall repent, and what furnishes enjoyment, still more unexhausted, still less changeable - is the most religious and the most voluptuous of men'.

Blake comments: 'True Christian philosophy' <sup>1.</sup> Blake objects to the deadening effect of the priest's teaching on the active and energetic life and to the priest's divided society. The one encourages decadence of the creative energy in man and the other teaches enmity and war by religious and social discrimination. All these efforts are to maintain the priest's own powerful position. He protects his material wealth by accusing and frightening people for their love of self and of the world, and he keeps his authority and rules the people by pitting one religion against the other, and 'Heaven' against 'Hell'. The priest's will and strength are based on his abstract

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1. Annotations to Lavater, (K. p.75).



ideas and assumed superiority. Thus 'The Human Abstract' and similar poems in the Songs of Experience are Blake's response to the priest's indifference to society.

The corresponding poem to 'The Human Abstract' is 'The Divine Image' in the Songs of Innocence. Here we have the humane society as opposed to the inhuman one, and the society in which all men depend on their own effort because they do not depend on an abstract God, and here we have Blake's religion instead of that of the priest. The priest sees the divine being reflected only among Angels in 'Heaven' who have one religion and one driving love or interest. But Blake sees the divine image in the human form. 'Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell' there is the human form 'divine' and 'there God is dwelling too'.

'To Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love  
All pray in their distress  
And to these virtues of delight  
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love  
Is God, our father dear,  
And Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love  
Is man, his child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,  
Pity a human face,  
And Love, the human form divine,  
And peace, the human dress.'

Since all human beings agree in essence we must love the human form in people of different race and religion. God can only exist in this condition of human relationship.

'Then every man, of every clime,  
That prays in his distress,  
Prays to the human form divine,  
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,  
 In heathen, Turk, or jew;  
 Where Mercy, Love, & Pity dwell  
 There God is dwelling too.' 1.

In his recent work, D.G. Gillham discusses Blake's 'contrary states' in the Songs of Innocence and Experience and he seems right in disagreeing with E.D. Hirsch who discusses the two sets of songs on the assumption that they 'express two distinct outlooks that Blake in each case held with an unqualified vigor and fervor of belief'.<sup>2.</sup> It seems, however, Blake in the two sets of Songs expresses the states of the human soul in two different social conditions. In one condition, that is in The Songs of Innocence, humanity and practical life are what religion is about. But in another condition, that is in The Songs of Experience, religion is distinct and separated from humanity and practical life. It is merely an abstract and superficial teaching by the priest. Blake's 'Human Abstract', as we have seen before, expresses this kind of social condition where the humanity exists only in theory or in the passive mind of the priest.

D.G. Gillham, however, seems closer in his assumption to what Blake meant in the songs. Gillham wrote:

'In The Songs of Experience Blake allows some of his characters to affirm the values and theories of rationalism, but he emphasizes that these are valid for the mind working

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1. Songs of Innocence, (K. p.117).
  2. D.G. Gillham, Blake's Contrary States (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1966), p.2.



in a superficial way only, and he describes the alternative mentality of Innocence. This alternative is not put forward as an original character or as a stage in the development of man, but as a condition of a completeness and harmony of being'. 1.

In The Songs of Innocence society is not divided into 'Heaven' and 'Hell'. There is a unity and harmony. Unity is both in body and mind. But in The Songs of Experience the priest has created a society based on 'negation' with one class ruling another by a static, awesome and rigid religion. The priest has established that his power comes from the Lord and thus is infallible. His Angels live in divine goodness and truth and thus must always be right. By these decrees he rules those in 'Hell'. Thus his religion is, as Blake says in The Marriage, like a 'mill', the symbol of a static society.

Swedenborg's religion is negative partly because he judges mankind from his own limited viewpoint, and puts his religion before the human form. But Blake, looking wider and deeper, says that 'humanity' is what religion is all about - people are the divine image - if we want pity, love and peace we should 'pray' to ourselves and other human beings, that is rely on our own social efforts and seek true religion in brotherhood and humane social relationships. We must love every man of every country and the human form in 'heathen', 'Turk' or 'jew'. In other words 'All Religions are one', and the 'Religions of all Nations

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1. Ibid., p.6.



are derived from each Nation's different reception of the Poetic Genius, which is everywhere call'd the Spirit of Prophecy'. 1.

The 'Spirit of Prophecy' or the 'Poetic Genius' is the creative mind in man.

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1. All Religions are One, (K. p.98).

CHAPTER V'ALL DEITIES RESIDE IN THE HUMAN BREAST'1. The Idea of Correspondence.

In the preceding chapters we have demonstrated that 'The Argument', the idea of 'contraries' and the 'Proverbs of Hell' are directly related to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell. In this chapter we shall also examine the rest of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell in the context of Heaven and Hell. Our purpose in this attempt is twofold. Firstly, to discuss Swedenborg's idea of 'correspondence' and Blake's opposing view point. Secondly by the evidence thus obtained we shall show that Swedenborg divides the subject from its object or spirit from its body and thus abstracts mental deities from their object or material body. This discussion finally will lead us to Blake's idea of 'animism' and 'imagination' or his philosophy of 'contraries'.

We shall first concentrate on Plate 11 and then discuss Plates 12-17. Plate 11 of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell follows the 'Proverbs of Hell':

'The ancient Poets animated all sensible objects with Gods or Geniuses, calling them by the names and adorning them with the properties of woods, rivers, mountains, lakes, cities, nations, and whatever their enlarged & numerous senses could perceive.

And particularly they studied the genius of each city & country, placing it under its mental deity;

Till a system was formed, which some took advantage of, & enslav'd the vulgar by attempting to realize or abstract the mental deities from their objects: thus began Priesthood;

Choosing forms of worship from poetic tales.

And at length they pronounc'd that the Gods had order'd such things.

Thus men forgot that All deities reside in the human breast.' 1.

This Plate is, in fact, the poet's view of how organized religion or priesthood was created and used to enslave the vulgar. By this enslavement man forgot that he possessed Poetic Genius or a creative mind. He started worshipping poetic tales or what were created by man himself or <sup>the</sup> Poetic Genius which resides in every human being. Thus the creator of true art became enslaved by false art or materialized and established forms of worship. To justify the correspondence between his God and Angels in 'Heaven' <sup>the</sup> or/Church, Swedenborg appeals to <sup>the</sup> ancients as the following illustration shows:

'Such being the perception concerning The Divine (Being or Principle) in the heavens, it is accordingly implanted in every man who receives any influx from heaven, to think of God under a human shape: This was the case with the ancients..' 2.

'....the simple seeing Him in thought as the Ancient (One) in brightness..' 3.

'....the Ancients had an idea of a human (Principle) in regard to the Divine, '...4.

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1. M.H.H., Plate 11, (K. p.153).
  2. H.H., p.58, no.82.
  3. Ibid.
  4. Ibid., p.59, no.84.



'It was otherwise with the ancients, to whom the science of correspondence was the chief of all sciences:' 1.

'The most ancient people, who were celestial men, by virtue of correspondence thought as the angels, ....' 2.

'....wherefore the ancients, who were in the science of correspondences, celebrated their holy worship in groves; ....' 3.

'I have been instructed from heaven, that the most ancient people on our earth, ....' 4.

'....it was for this reason that that time was called the golden age, of which also it is said by ancient writers, ....' 5.

'....inasmuch as gold from correspondence signifies celestial good, in which the most ancient people were principled....' 6.

'Hence it was that the ancients, with whom the church was representative, ....' 7.

'He did not speak with them as with the ancients by an influx into their interiors, ....' 8.

'Hence some of the ancients had an opinion, that after some thousands of years, they should return into their former life, ....' 9.

More specifically, however, Plate 11 refers to passages in the chapters of Heaven and Hell entitled: 'That it results from the Divine Human Principle of the Lord, that Heaven in the whole and in part resembles a Man' and 'That there is a correspondence of all Things of heaven and hell with all things of man'.

1. Ibid., p.66, no.87.
2. Ibid., p.67, no.87.
3. Ibid., p.82, no.111.
4. Ibid., p.86, no.115.
5. Ibid., p.86, no.115.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p.91, no.119.
8. Ibid., p.185, no.254.
9. Ibid., p.188, no.256.

In one chapter, while defining his idea of God, Swedenborg wrote that:

'....the ancients had an idea of a Human Principle in regard to the Divine, is manifest from the appearances of The Divine before Abraham, Lot, Joshua, Gideon, Manoah, his wife, and others, who, although they saw God as a Man, still adored Him as The God of the universe, calling Him the God of heaven and earth, and Jehovah:....' 1.

Blake's use of the terms 'ancient', 'adoring' and 'calling' in Plate 11 was almost certainly suggested by Swedenborg's passage.

In the other chapter, while discussing his idea of 'correspondence' Swedenborg wrote:

'I have been instructed from heaven, that the most ancient people on our earth, who were celestial men, thought from correspondences themselves, and that the natural things of the world, which were before their eyes, served them as means of so thinking, and that in consequence of their being of such a quality, they had consociation with the angels, and discoursed with them, and that thus by them heaven was conjoined to the world: it was for this reason that that time was called the golden age, of which also it is said by ancient writers, that the inhabitants of heaven dwelt with men, and held converse with them as friends with friends. But after that period other men succeeded, who did not think from correspondences themselves, but from the science of correspondences..' 2.

Blake would agree with Swedenborg's idea that 'ancient people...thought from correspondences....and that the natural things of the world, which were before their eyes, served them as means of so thinking,....'

In his letter to Dr. Trusler (23rd August, 1799) he writes:

'I know that This World Is a World of imagination & Vision. I see Every thing I paint in This World.....'.

1. H.H., op. cit., p.59, no.84.
2. H.H., p.86, no.115.



In other words the natural things of the world serve as a means of thinking or imagination. But Blake does not agree with Swedenborg's contradictory idea that the natural world subsists from the spiritual world. The contradiction in Swedenborg's outlook seems obvious. On the one hand he says the 'natural things of the world... served....as means of thinking....' On the other hand he says that the 'natural world exists and subsists from the spiritual world'.

By the word 'correspondence' Swedenborg means that the 'whole natural world corresponds to the spiritual world....whatever exists in the natural world from the spiritual, this is said to correspond'. 1.

In his philosophy of 'correspondence' Swedenborg essentially attempts to establish the 'Heaven' and 'Hell' relationship by saying that

'the natural world exists and subsists from the spiritual world, altogether as an effect from its efficient cause'.

In other words the natural world is created from the spiritual world or the material world is the reflection of spiritual or intellectual mind. Everything in society and nature corresponds to the spiritual world. The whole doctrine of correspondence in Heaven and Hell might be put briefly as follows:-

Firstly, the universal Heaven or Angels resemble one man, and is called the 'Grand Man', and the Angelic societies

1. Ibid., p.68, no.89.



correspond to the members of the 'Grand Man'.

Secondly, there is correspondence between heaven with three kingdoms of 'animal', 'vegetable' and 'mineral', and

Thirdly, correspondence between Heaven with the sun and light in the natural world.

The 'Grand Man' apparently represents the whole 'Heaven' or established church. The Angelic societies of which 'Heaven' is composed form the different parts of the man - the head, the breast, the arms, the loins. Those in the head excel the others for they are wholly principled in wisdom and intelligence.<sup>1</sup> All things in the world have a meaning through correspondence: apart from the head by which intelligence and wisdom are signified, charity is signified by the breast.

'by the loins, conjugal love; by the arms and hands, the power of truth, by the feet, the natural principle'. 2.

Blake comments on this in the proverb:-

'The head Sublime, the heart Pathos, the genitals Beauty, the hands & feet Proportion.' 3.

The words, 'head', 'heart', (love), 'genitals', (loins), 'feet' and 'hands' in the proverb are taken from the relevant chapter.

Swedenborg gives a character to every part of the body. As those in the 'Heaven' excel all others, so those

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1. Swedenborg's concept of the 'Grand Man' is similar to Hobbes' 'Leviathan'.
  2. H.N. p.72, no.97.
  3. 'Proverbs of Hell', Plate 10, (K. p.152).

in the feet are lower than others, 'spiritual - natural', nearer to the earth. Those in 'ears', for example, are mainly principled in hearkening and obedience, those in the 'nostrils' in perception and those in the 'mouth' in discourse.<sup>1.</sup> Blake satirising this 'Grand Man', which is based on passive memories, writes in the proverb:-

'The eyes of fire, the nostrils of air, the mouth of water, the beard of earth.' 2.

He would add that, if the head excels all others, then:-

'When thou seest an Eagle, thou seest a portion of Genius; lift up thy head!' 3.

Blake by using the words from the material world or reality turns Swedenborg's philosophy upside down.

'It is to be noted', writes Swedenborg, 'that the natural world exists and subsists from the spiritual world,.....' 4.

Swedenborg in fact takes his passive memories as the origin of the existing material world. He also applies this theory to animals, vegetables and minerals.

There is correspondence between 'Heaven' with these three kingdoms. Swedenborg draws similarities between the intellectual progression of Angels and the processes that take place in a tree starting from its 'seed', and its growth, putting forth leaves, then flowers and finally bearing fruit or seeds. According to their different

1. H.H., p.72, no.96.

2. 'Proverbs of Hell', Plate 9, (K. p.152).

3. Ibid.

4. H.H., p.68, no.89.

species trees 'correspond' to the perception and knowledge of good and truth, from which come intelligence and wisdom; wherefore the ancients, who were in the science of correspondences, celebrated their holy worship in groves'.<sup>1.</sup>

'Heaven', the church and man are compared to different trees according to the extent of their use - 'vine', 'olive', 'cedar'; other trees are used in the Bible. Food also is derived from trees

'specially that which is produced from the seeds of harvest, corresponding to the affections of good and of truth.' 2.

'To know the spiritual things in heaven to which the natural objects in the world correspond, is however impossible for anyone at this day except from heaven....' 3.

Swedenborg attempts to justify his 'Heavenly' position by the objects in nature. In other words as the seed is to a tree so is wisdom to the Angels, and their natural or material life springs from their wisdom or spiritual world. Blake repudiates this theory of intellectual progression. Intellectual progression is based on practical life where man makes use of his Poetic Genius or unchanging mental power. Demonstrating the practical side of life, Blake writes in the proverb:

'In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy.'

Peasants, farmers and those whose life is directly dependant on the earth look forward to the harvest day, and are necessarily interested in the rate of production.

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1. Ibid., p.82, no.111.
  2. Ibid., p.83, no.111 (my emphasis).
  3. Ibid., p.81, no.110.



Swedenborg's joy in winter comes from his spiritual or intellectual heat but the peasants' joy comes from a good harvest.

Swedenborg lists the animals which, like all things in the world, correspond to the 'Heaven'. He discusses, for example, how the bees 'make provision' for themselves and their young for the future, and have a form of government, discarding the useless. The

'bees know how to collect honey from flowers, to build cells of wax in which to store up their honey'. 1.

Blake takes the word 'bee' from the passage and uses in the proverb:

'The busy bee has no time for sorrow'.

In other words an active being like the 'bee' is so busy in its productive work that it has no time for worry about its dependence or correspondence to <sup>the</sup> spiritual world or 'Heaven'.

He refers to the parts of the day, morning, noon, evening and night, as correspondences to 'Heaven'. These correspond to the 'states' of Angels in 'Heaven'. Blake, instead, takes the active and practical side of the argument with which those in 'Hell' would be familiar as a daily occurrence, and writes:

'Think in the morning. Act in the noon.  
Eat in the evening. Sleep in the night.' 2.

All this means that Swedenborg attempts to demonstrate that

1. Ibid., pp.78-9, no.107.

2. 'Proverbs of Hell', Plate 9, (K. p.152).

all objects such as trees, animals, mountains, water, silver, copper, gold etc. correspond to the spiritual world. They exist and subsist in nature from divine order.

'Divine order is the result of the divine good, which proceeds from the Lord; ....' 1.

The Angels in 'Heaven' receive divine good and thus are able to see the corresponding order in mundane nature.

Divine order

'proceeds from Him through the heavens successively into the world, and there terminates in ultimates: those things, which are according to order there, are correspondences;...' 2.

Thus Swedenborg's philosophy is the other extreme side of the philosophy of nature which Locke and Newton propagated. Swedenborg derives the divine order from invisible spiritual sources but Locke and Newton derive it from the ever present nature.

Blake accepted neither Locke's theory of mind<sup>3.</sup> nor Swedenborg's transcendental or metaphysical philosophy. Both Locke and Swedenborg make man subject to external objects by underrating the importance of human creativity. Locke regarded the human mind as passive, like a 'tabula rasa' and, by doing so, made man subject to sense principle: 'None could have other than natural or organic thoughts', writes Blake, 'if he had none but organic perceptions.' 4.

1. H.H., p.78, no.107.

2. Ibid., p.78, no.107.

3. See, for example, There is no Natural Religion (K. pp.97-8).

4. Ibid.

Locke indeed recognised the existence of the material world which is a great step forward in the development of empirical philosophy. But he denies the creativity of mind by regarding it as a passive and unwilling being subject to external impressions.

Swedenborg denies the individuality and creativity of man by going to the other extreme in his metaphysical philosophy. He not only failed to recognise man's creative energy but even regarded man as an unimportant being by saying that:

'Still without man as a medium, divine influx into the world continues,.....' 1.

The proverb 'Where man is not, nature is barren' is a concise criticism of Swedenborg's philosophy which implicitly underrates and belittles the importance of man and his creative genius.

A closer examination of Heaven and Hell reveals that there is a basic contradiction in the philosophy of Swedenborg. On the one hand he lists the numerous objects, material possessions, garments and buildings in 'Heaven'. In other words he recognises the existence and importance of the material world; but on the other hand he denies the existence of the material world by dividing his memories or mental deities from objects. He calls his memories 'wisdom' and 'intelligence' then makes his memories the source of the material world. The Angels possess glory and eminence in 'Heaven' because they have heavenly

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1. H.H., p.85, no.112.



intelligence and wisdom. The degree of Angels in 'Heaven' depends on the degree of their intelligence and wisdom. Those who excel others in these respects have more excellent garments and other possessions:

'The garments with which the angels are clothed, like other things, correspond....to their intelligence....' 1.

By the possession of this wisdom and intelligence Angels are superior to the simple people.

'It is believed that the wise will possess glory and eminence in heaven above the simple'. 2.

Those who are principled in intelligence can also walk in beautiful gardens and gather flowers.

'To those who are principled in intelligence, there appear gardens and paradises, full of trees and flowers of every kind: the trees are there planted in the most beautiful order, so combined as to form arbours, through which are arched entrances, and around which are shady walks, all in such beauty as it is impossible to describe: they who are principled in intelligence also walk there, and gather flowers, and form garlands, with which they adorn little children: there are also species of trees and flowers there, which were never seen nor given in the world: on the trees also there are fruits, according to the good of love, in which the intelligent are principled:....' 3.

In other words, according to Swedenborg, the joy and beauty of the gardens and all material objects arise from the 'intelligence' of the Angels. But to Blake intellectual delight and energy rise from the 'Body' or gardens, and all objects which surround the Angels in 'Heaven':

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1. Ibid., p.132, no.178, see also pp.137-40, nos.184-8.
  2. Ibid., p.272, no.346.
  3. Ibid., pp.130-1, no.176.

'Energy is .... from Body'

or the objective world. And mental deities or energies are from objects. Swedenborg postulates divine intervention in order to justify the existence of things in 'Heaven'.

'The things which are in the heavens cannot be seen by the eyes of man's body, but by the 1. eyes of his spirit; ... when it pleases the Lord...'

To prove and also support his idea that things which appear in the mind are related to the wisdom and intelligence or knowledge of good and truth of Angels, Swedenborg gives the 'ancients' as an example:

'Trees, according to their species, correspond to the perceptions and knowledges of good and truth, from which come intelligence and wisdom; wherefore the ancients, who were in the science of correspondences, celebrated their holy worship in groves; hence it is that, in the Word, mention is so frequently made of trees, and that heaven, the church, and man, are compared to them.....' 2.

Blake criticises Swedenborg for separating the mental deities or energy from their objects:

'The ancient poets animated all sensible objects with Gods or Geniuses, calling them by the names and adorning them with the properties of woods, rivers, mountains, lakes, cities, nations, and whatever their enlarged and numerous senses could perceive.

.....

'Till a system was formed, which some took advantage of, and enslav'd the vulgar by attempting to realize or abstract the mental deities from their objects: thus began Priesthood;

.....

'And at length they pronounc'd that the Gods had order'd such things.

Thus men forgot that All deities reside in the human breast.'

1. Ibid., p.128, no.171.

2. Ibid., p.82, no.111.



Deities are the imaginative or mental forms of material objects. The major difference between the mind of human beings and that of the lower animals consists perhaps of a difference in creativity. The human being can create 'mental forms' of the objects of his environment and can imagine, think over, compare and choose his pleasant and delightful impressions. The mind of man has this unchangeable power which he applies to his particular environment. Swedenborg's thoughts and mental images, for example, are formed in his particular environment. Swedenborg indeed had potentially as creative a mind as Blake, but he set his limited self-interest or desire against unlimited and universal man, whereas Blake stressed the unchangeable and creative mind, believing:

'The true Man is the source, he being the Poetic Genius'.

The 'Poetic Genius' is the source because it is unchangeable. It applies its unchangeable imagination power to changeable objects or environments. The ancient people and poets animated all natural objects which existed in their environment. The elements of nature, like the sun and rain, were regarded as gods or geniuses at a time when man depended on agriculture. He adorned these natural deities by

'woods, rivers, mountains, lakes, cities, nations, and whatever their enlarged and numerous senses could percieve'.

The poets address woods, rivers, mountains and whatever they perceive. They express their feelings, tell



their griefs, sing their songs and invite them to listen and fulfil their needs. Wordsworth says:

'...The Poets, in their elegies and songs  
Lamenting the departed, call the groves,  
They call upon the hills and streams to mourn,  
And senseless rocks; nor idly; for they speak,  
In these their invocations, with a voice  
Obedient to the strong creative power  
Of human passion.....!.....' 1.

What the poets address in nature are objects and material, and the mental images of the poets are formed by the impression of these objects. But the priest attempts 'to realise or abstract the mental deities from their objects'. In other words, for example, Swedenborg fails to realise that his memories of all things in 'Heaven' and nature such as trees, flowers and fruits are formed by the objects or material beings which he has seen before. He abstracts his memories from their objects by giving them an independent entity or he attempts to base the material life upon his mental images or memories. By this abstraction men 'forgot that all deities reside in the human breast', the human heart. In other words man creates the objects of his affection and driving love. Thus Swedenborg, as we have noted before, puts the passive memories before the creative personality or 'eternal man' and allocates his memories to the intelligence and wisdom which are confined to those in the privileged position of 'Heaven'.

Swedenborg applies this preassumed superiority of

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1. W. Wordsworth, The Excursion, I. 475-8.

Angels in intelligence and wisdom to his social system. In other words the material possession and glory of those in 'Heaven' correspond to their wisdom and intelligence. The 'exteriors correspond to the interiors'.<sup>1.</sup> There are, indeed, some passages in Heaven and Hell which illustrate that Swedenborg was also conscious of the direct correspondence between the objective or material world and subjective or spiritual mind. For example:-

'The things of heaven have been seen by me altogether like the things in the world, and so perceptibly that I knew no other than that I was in the world, and in the palace of a king there.' 2.

Nevertheless his idea that 'exteriors correspond to the interiors' plays a dominant part in his philosophy of correspondence. Swedenborg divides his own mental beings from reality or their objects by pronouncing that 'God had order'd such things':

'....when it pleases the Lord, those eyes are opened....' 3.

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1. H.H., p.129, no.175.  
 2. Ibid., p.129, no.174.  
 3. Ibid., p.128, no.171.



## 2. Animism or Theory of Object - Soul.

In the preceding part we have discussed how man has a creative mind and creates mental deities out of the objects of his environment; the priest abstracts or divides these mental deities from their objects. In this part we shall attempt to illustrate how man as poet animates reality or objects, in contrast to the priest who animates his passive memories.

Swedenborg uses the term 'animate' when he is discussing the naturalists' point of view that the universe is like an animal body and all things in it are actuated by the principle of life and motion. Swedenborg in denouncing these ideas in favour of faith in the Lord wrote:

'.....They who profess to believe in an invisible Divine (being or principle), which they call the animating principle.....of the universe, from which all things existed, and reject faith in the Lord, have been taught by experience that they believe in no God, because an invisible Divine (being or principle) is to them like nature in its first principles, which is no object of faith and love, in as much as it is no object of thought: these have their lot amongst those who are called naturalists..' 1.

The philosophers of nature, as we have seen in the first chapter, regarded the universe either as the

'Great Machine working by rigidly determined laws of material causation' 2.

or as a great living being in which every part had an

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1. H.H., p.76, no.104.

2. Basil Willey The Eighteenth Century Background, p.11.



organised and proper position. The living being was regarded as The Deity or the Soul of the World.

For instance, in Hume's Dialogues concerning Natural Religion, one of the characters, Philo, expresses what Swedenborg would call a naturalist philosophy:

'....if we survey the universe', writes Hume, 'so far as it falls under our knowledge, it bears a great resemblance to an animal or organised body, and seems actuated with a like principle of life and motion. A continual circulation of matter in it produces no disorder: a continual waste in every part is incessantly repaired: the closest sympathy is perceived throughout the entire system and each part or member, in performing its proper offices, operates both to its own preservation and to that of the whole. The world, therefore, I infer, is an animal, and the Deity is the Soul of the world, actuating it, and actuated by it.' 1.

Hume continues to suggest various other theories about the origin of the world. His character CLEANTHES contesting the previous theory says:

'....it seems to me, that, though the world does, in many circumstances, resemble an animal body, yet is the analogy also defective in many circumstances, the most material: no organs of sense; no seat of thought or reason; no one precise origin of motion and action. In short, it seems to bear a stronger resemblance to a vegetable than to an animal,...' 2.

But PHILO, whose position Richard Wollheim believes to be identical with that of Hume, suggests that:

'The world plainly resembles more an animal or a vegetable than it does a watch or a knitting loom. Its cause, therefore, it is more probable, resembles the cause of the former. The cause of the former is

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(ed. by Richard Wollheim)  
 1. See Hume on Religion (Collins ed. London, 1963) pp.143-  
 2. Ibid., p. 145. 4.  
 3. Ibid., p.18.

generation or vegetation. The cause, therefore, of the world, we may infer to be something similar or analogous to generation or vegetation.' 1.

Swedenborg denounces Deism, yet he himself, as we have seen before, deifies his own passive memories. In other words, philosophers of nature deified their mechanical idea of <sup>the</sup> universe and Swedenborg deified his passive and limited memories.<sup>2.</sup>

Blake objected to natural religion or deism for reasons different from those of Swedenborg. Swedenborg rejected deism in favour of the established church whereas Blake rejected it because of its mechanical philosophy which regarded the mind of man as passive and his ideas based on the sense principle. The deists saw the deity in nature but Blake said that deity existed in man. In other words, it is man who creates and gives meaning to nature. He uses the word 'animate' in a sense different from that of Swedenborg and the philosophers of nature. Blake's interpretation of the word 'animate' is similar to that of the romantic poets especially Shelley. Both Swedenborg and the deists, as we have pointed out, under-rated the importance of the creative personality or mind. Swedenborg attempted to make man subject to his limited and passive memories while the philosophers of nature made him

1. Ibid., p.150.

2. For details see Basil Willey The Eighteenth Century Background, Cambridge, pp.10-21.



subject to a mechanical system of the universe and society by regarding man as a passive part of a huge machine.

Blake uses the word 'animate' in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell in a different sense from that of Swedenborg and the philosophers of nature. To Blake the act of animation by the ancient people was based on the creative and practical life. This was not merely a fanciful act or illusion but closely related to practical life and their needs. The action was a creative and unifying power, therefore hopeful and inspiring. This creative animism corresponds to the passive animism, as the creative imagination corresponds to passive and static memories. The animism or deism which Blake criticizes in his writings is based on passive memories or mechanical system. Passive animism has three main characteristics. Firstly, as we have pointed out before, Swedenborg abstracts or separates the mental images or spirit from their objects or body. Secondly he interprets his mental images as being granted by divine providence and the sign of his excellence or superiority to other people. Thirdly, Swedenborg terms his mental images or passive memories as 'Heaven' as opposed to the people in 'Hell'.

Blake has used the word 'animated' in his early writings too. It first appears in She Bore Pale Desire (written before 1777). He explains how 'conscience' was sent as a 'guard to reason'. Reason was once fairer than light till it 'foul'd in Knowledge's dark Prison house. For knowledge drove sweet Innocence away,'.



This knowledge is based on abstraction. It animates its limited and static memories. Natural man is proud only of his own memories and calls them god and goddess;

'Pride made a Goddess fair, or Image rather,  
till knowledge animated it; 'twas call'd  
Self love.' 1.

'Self love' and selfhood are the same thing and are based on limited natural memories. The passive personality animates his own limited memories and call them knowledge which process is like a cave or 'dark prison house'. This passive and limited knowledge negates 'innocence' or creative imagination. The difference between animism in Then She Bore Pale Desire and in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is that in the first the knowledge of good and evil animates the passive memories which exist only in the passive mind of the reasoner. But in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell the poet-man or creativenmind animates sensible objects. The creative mind or imagination neither abstracts the mental images from their external objects nor makes the creative mind subject to the sensible objects and Nature. In other words the passive personality abstracts or divorces poetic tales and mental images from reality and a specific context.

In the books of Vala or The Four Zoas and Jerusalem Blake criticises this limited and abstract animism. The

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1. Then She Bore Pale Desire, (K. p.42).

passive personality or mind animates his own limited natural memories, calling them, as Swedenborg does, heaven or divine beings and setting up his limited mental deities as heaven against hell or soul against objects. These animated memories, as we shall see in the worm symbol, are 'woman' because they are passive and based on natural impression. The 'woman' has her own will which is called 'Female-Will'. She weaves her limited memories together and then begins to animate them:

'Wond'ring she saw her woof begin to animate, & not  
As Garments woven subservient to her hands, but having  
a will  
Of its own, perverse & wayward.' 1.

Again in the book of The Four Zoas the limited natural memories or selfhood are represented, as we shall discuss in the chapter on the 'worm symbol', by Tharmas who is being animated:

'Tharmas like a pillar of sand roll'd round by the  
whirlwind,  
An animated Pillar rolling round & round in incessant  
rage.' 2.

The 'pillar' represents the mechanical social system in the eighteenth century which had been set in motion by a clock-maker God. Deists animated this mechanical system and called it 'Deism'.

'The Ashes of Mystery began to animate; they call'd  
it Deism  
And Natural Religion; as of old, so now anew began  
Babylon again in Infancy, call'd Natural Religion.' 3.

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1. The Four Zoas, Night The First, (K. ed. lines 83-5, p.266).
  2. Ibid., Night The Eighth, lines 469-70, p.353.
  3. The Four Zoas, Night The Eighth, lines 618-20.



The 'Ashes of Mystery' represent abstraction, and Blake terms religion and God of the priest a mystery because they are abstract. Natural Religion is based on sense principle and a static social system. In other words those who are in 'Heaven' animate their own natural memories which are different from those in 'Hell'. But this animated 'Heaven' intellectually turns against 'Hell' like a being assuming superiority. Thus Natural Religion is the religion of the divided and rigid society of 'Heaven' and 'Hell', or Babylon. Babylon corresponds to Jerusalem and is the divided society, fallen from brotherhood or Jerusalem. The 'woman' or animated Selfhood in Babylon or society of 'Heaven' and 'Hell' has enslaved Jerusalem under her 'shadow.' The woman or materialism is devouring like a worm and the innocent children of Jerusalem are mournful:

"Why wilt thou give to her a Body whose life is but  
a Shade?  
"Her joy and love, a shade, a shade of sweet repose:  
"But animated and vegetated she is a devouring worm.  
"What shall we do for thee, O lovely mild Jerusalem?"  
1.

Jerusalem is hidden beneath the mechanical social system similar to that of the knitting loom, and the passive mind animates or reflects what it sees in society.

'The golden cords of the Looms animate beneath their  
touches soft  
Along the Island white, .....

2.

Blake, in fact, uses the term 'animate' in two different senses. In The Marriage, for example, it is

1. Jerusalem, plate 12, lines 1-5 (K. p.631).
2. Ibid., plate 82, l.14 (K. p.725).



used in a creative sense; but he also uses the passive sense of the term which we have just illustrated above, which puts passive memories before the creative personality or Man. The other animism is based on the creative personality or 'Poetic Genius'. The poets, by animating sensible objects, create sensual enjoyment in all people. They awaken the eyes of imagination. Poets, contrary to the passive personality, recognise creative man or 'Poetic Genius' as a true quality as opposed to limited natural memories. It is a genuine quality because it is creative and possessed by every man. The creative personality or poet unites all men in their 'Poetic Genius' and thus they are brothers. But the passive personality unites men by natural memories and those who do not have similar memories are excluded or have their own society and thus men are divided according to what is non-human. Those who are in 'Heaven' have special memories, superior to those who are in 'Hell'. These memories, as we have seen before, are all important to the passive personality. He sees and worships his abstract memories as God. But the creative man sees God who 'only Acts & Is, in existing beings or Men.' In a word the passive personality sees his finite and limited memories but the creative personality sees infinite creation in everything. This is the theme in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell of Plates 12-13 where Blake satirises Swedenborg's abstract philosophy and religion. The poets animate sensible objects which exist in their surroundings.

They invoke, as Wordsworth says,

'the groves....the hills and streams....  
senseless rocks.' 1.

The poets address the objects in nature and express their desires and feelings through it. In joyful days they invite nature to join them with joy and in the day of sorrow and need call her to bring them peace and love. In other words the poets give a personality to nature and make them talk, see, smile and bring love. Blake's poems to the four seasons (1769-78), are good examples of what he means by animism. In the poem 'To Spring' he addresses spring who 'looks' down through the clear windows of the morning. He calls Spring to turn her 'eyes' upon our western isle. The hills are 'telling' each other of the news. The poet asks her to visit his clime with her holy 'feet' and asks spring to let the wind 'kiss' her perfumed garments and let the morning and evening breath scatter her 'pearls' on the 'love-sick' land that mourns for her. Finally the poet calls her to adorn his land with her fair 'fingers' and pour 'kisses' on the land's 'bosom' and put golden crown on her 'languish'd head':

'O thou with dewy locks, who lookest down  
Thro' the clear windows of the morning, turn  
Thine angel eyes upon our western isle,  
Which in full choir hails they approach, O Spring!

The hills tell each other, and the list'ning  
Vallies hear; all our longing eyes are turned  
Up to thy bright pavillions; issue forth,  
And let thy holy feet visit our clime.

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1. W. Wordsworth, The Excursion, I. 475-8.



Come o'er the eastern hills, and let our winds  
 Kiss thy perfumed garments; let us taste  
 Thy morn and evening breath; scatter thy pearls  
 Upon our love-sick land that mourns for thee.

O deck her forth with thy fair fingers; pour  
 Thy soft kisses on her bosom; and put  
 Thy golden crown upon her languish'd head,  
 Whose modest tresses were bound up for thee!' 1.

The poet animates Spring. He associates her with the actions of a human-being, and expresses his feeling through the animated object.

In his poem 'To Summer' Blake addresses Summer who passes over the valleys. The poet depicts the sun's large 'nostrils', which pours out flames, and 'ruddy limbs' and flourishing 'hair'. He hears his 'voice' under thickest shade and the 'vallies love' the Summer in 'his pride.' Although the Summer is in his pride it is the poet man who gives this pride to nature. The poet has his pen to write and his instruments to sing. His youths are bolder and maidens fairer than those of nature. But the poet creates the nature and uses it as the means of communication and tools of expression for his intellectual needs. He gives nature personality and makes her play a part in the story of human life:

'O thou, who passest thro' our vallies in  
 Thy strength, curb thy fierce steeds, allay the heat  
 That flames from their large nostrils! thou, O  
 Summer,  
 Oft pitched'st here thy golden tent, and oft  
 Beneath our oaks hast slept, while we beheld  
 With joy thy ruddy limbs and flourishing hair....

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1. 'Poetical Sketches; (K. p.1).



Our vallies love the Summer in his pride.

Our bards are fam'd who strike the silver wire:  
Our youths are bolder than the southern swains:  
Our maidens fairer in the sprightly dance:  
We lack not songs, nor instruments of joy,' 1.

In 'To Autumn' the poet animates fruitful autumn;  
adorning it with 'fruits', 'jolly voice', dancing  
daughters:

'O autumn, laden with fruit, and stained  
With the blood of the grape,.....'

The poet invites autumn to sit and listen to his 'fresh  
pipe':

'.....pass not, but sit  
Beneath my shady roof; there thou may'st rest,  
And tune thy jolly voice to my fresh pipe;...' 2.

The 'fresh pipe' is not exclusive to the poet. Everybody  
has poetic genius and animates his own environment.

Shepherds animate green hills and meadows. Farmers animate  
plants. But the poet is conscious of the poetic genius  
which exists in every man and attempts to awaken and raise  
genius or sensual enjoyment in others too. He makes all  
take part in this joy for the 'fresh pipe' speaks in the  
language of all children or honest men:

'.....all the daughters of the year shall dance!  
Sing now the lusty song of fruits and flowers.'

The symbols of 'fruit' and 'flower' are infinite and common  
to all. Every man can take part in the dance and song.  
The poet or prophet has, contrary to the priest, a uniting

1. Ibid., pp.1-2.

2. Ibid., p.2.

power. By animating an object of Nature he desires to communicate with all human spirits or geniuses. He expresses his feeling to what attracts him and rouses his enthusiasm or love and what repels him and rouses his dislike. Man-poet animates useful objects in nature and adorns them with flowers and whatever he perceives. For example in the following poem he adorns the sun with the sensible objects of blossoms and flowers:

'The narrow bud opens her beauties to  
The sun, and love runs in her thrilling veins;  
Blossoms hang round the brows of morning,....

.....

And feather'd clouds strew flowers round her head.'

.....' 1.

The poet, contrary to the priest, animates the sensible objects or what really exists in the outside world. The sun is personified as a creative being or god who is adorned by woods and plants or whatever the poet's 'enlarged and numerous senses could perceive'. But the priest abstracts such poetical expressions from their objects.

Swedenborg, for example, in the chapter of 'Concerning the Sun In Heaven' abstracts the word 'sun' from its sensible object or external body by saying that:

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1. Ibid., p.2.



'In heaven the sun of the world doth not appear, nor any thing which is from that sun, still there is a sun there, together with light and heat,....the sun of heaven is the Lord, the light there is divine truth, and the heat there is divine good, which proceed from the Lord as a sun,.....' 1.

The priest, contrary to the poet, does not see the sun in the world. His God and sun are abstract. He sees them in his heaven or passive memories.

'.....that the Lord actually appears in heaven as a sun, hath not only been told me by the angels, but hath also been given me occasionally to see,.....  
.....The Lord appears as a sun, not in heaven, but on high above the heavens.....' 2.

To Swedenborg the real sun exists in the mind. 'The reason why he appears before the eyes is, because the interiors, which are of the mind, see through the eyes, from the good of love.....' 3.

To Blake the sun of the world is a creator being and the 'narrow bud opens her beauties to him' and 'love runs in her thrilling veins'. But to Swedenborg the sun of the world

'appears.....as somewhat of thick darkness opposite to the sun of heaven,.....' 4.

To support his idea that by the sun is meant the Lord in heaven Swedenborg brings evidence from the Bible:

'Hence it is, in the Word, the Lord, as to love, is compared to the sun, and as to faith to the moon;....  
"the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, but the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, as the light of seven days," Isaiah XXX 26.' 5.

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1. H.H., p.87, no.117.  
2. Ibid., p.88, no.118.  
3. Ibid., p.90, no.118.

4. Ibid., p.93, no.122.  
5. Ibid., p.90, no.119.



To Blake this passage must be poetical and pregnant with creative imagination which sees creation or progression of nature and man in reality and active life. But Swedenborg is attempting to abstract the passage from reality or objective life by 'choosing forms of worship from poetic tales' or active life. And 'at length they pronounced that the Gods had order'd such things.' This division of subject from object, spirit from body, word from object and prophet from history or society did not exist in ancient time. There was close correspondence between practical life and human thought. In other words men derived their mental images from the sensible objects.

'Till a system was formed, which some took advantage of, & enslav'd the vulgar by attempting to realise or abstract the mental deities from their objects: thus began Priesthood:.....'

By the word 'system' Blake means the social system of 'Heaven' and 'Hell'. The priest or those in 'Heaven' enslaved the vulgar or those in 'Hell' by pronouncing that God has spoken to them and they have seen God. Thus began Priesthood. In other words priesthood started by the abstraction of mental deities from their sensible objects or by the division of intellectual activity from practical life: the 'Lord was thus seen' writes Swedenborg

'by the disciples when they were withdrawn from the body, and were in the light of heaven. Hence it was that the ancients,... turned their faces towards the sun in the east,.....'

turned their faces towards the sun in the east,.....'

That He appears

'as a sun in heaven, is also manifested from His transformation before Peter, James, and John, in that His face shone as the sun'. Matt. XXII.

The God or the sun of Swedenborg represents abstract memory as opposed to the real sun of the world. To Blake the ancient poets who were active people animated 'sensible objects' as gods or geniuses but the priest animates his own passive memories as the Lord or the sun.

All this means that the poets 'animate' the sensible objects in the world but the priest animates his limited passive memories. The poet personifies the sun of the world as a creative being or god but the priest sees it as 'thick darkness'. Swedenborg was not born with a limited vision but the state, religion and the social system of 'Heaven' and 'Hell', perverted Swedenborg's visions. In a letter to Dr. Trusler, Blake wrote:

'I see Every thing I paint In This World, but Every body does not see alike. To the Eyes of a Miser a Guinea is more beautiful than the Sun, & a bag worn with the use of Money has more beautiful proportions than a Vine filled with Grapes. The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the Eyes of others only a Green thing that stands in the way. Some See Nature all Ridicule & Deformity, & by these I shall not regulate my proportions; & Some Scarce see Nature at all. But to the Eyes of the Man of Imagination, Nature is Imagination itself. As a man is, So he Sees. As the Eye is formed, such are its Powers.' 1.

In other words, the outlook of man lies in his social

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1. The Letters, (K. p.793).



circumstances. Neither a miser or harlot <sup>is</sup> are so born, but their personalities are formed by their social circumstances, and 'Every Harlot was a Virgin once.'<sup>1.</sup>

The Poet does not merely animate the desirable and lovable elements such as 'perfumed garments' in Spring, clear waters in Summer, and fruits of Autumn. He also animates the pernicious or negative elements in nature, personifying them as beast and monster. Nonetheless the poet regards negative elements as transitory beside creative Spring and Summer. In the poem 'Winter' for example, Blake depicts winter as a 'direful monster' and asks him to bar his 'adamantine' doors and 'shake not' his roofs:

'O Winter! bar thine adamantine doors:  
The north is thine; there hast thou built thy dark  
Deep-founded habitation. Shake not thy roofs,  
Nor bend thy pillars with thine iron car.

.....

Lo! now the direful monster, whose skin clings  
To his strong bones, strides o'er the groaning rocks:

.....'

The poet believes that 'Winter' and all evil elements in nature are transitory whereas the good and creative elements such as the sun and summer are eternal. In other words winter is caused by the departure of the sun and change in the climate. This change and condition is transitory and can only exist:

'..... till heaven smiles, and the monster  
Is driv'n yelling to his caves beneath mount Hecla.'<sup>2.</sup>

1. The Gates of Paradise (K. p.771).

2. Poetical Sketches (K. p.34).



Thus the poet or man animates the sensible objects in his surrounding world. He animates them with genius or gods. It is the genius of Spring to bring fresh spirit and scatter pearls upon the 'love-sick land'. Summer brings strength and gives colours to the fruits of trees - then Autumn is adorned with fruits and 'stained with the blood of the grape.' These are geniuses or creative objectives in nature. The poet gives them personality and makes other people conscious of these qualities and enlarge their senses to perceive what really exists by animating or creating them in <sup>the</sup> form of images and symbols.

'It is the business of the Poet'

writes Shelley in his Preface to The Revolt of Islam

'to communicate to others the pleasure and the enthusiasm arising out of those images and feelings in the vivid presence of which within his own mind consists at once his inspiration and his reward.' 1.

The poet or man creates his own surrounding world. The images and symbols he uses are drawn from his environment. In other words man creates the sensible objects which surround him. In this act of creation both the object and the creator or the poetic man are equally important. Every man has 'Poetic Genius' and is attracted towards good and beauty as all children are attracted towards sweet things.

'As all men are alike (tho' infinitely various),  
So all Religions & as all similars, have one source. 2.  
The true Man is the source, he being the Poetic Genius.'

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1. The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley, ed. by Thomas Hutchinson, 1945, p.33.
  2. 'Principle 7th' of All Religions are One (K. p.98).

Favourable circumstances aid the development of this genius and unfavourable circumstances cause it to diminish and be buried under external impressions and negation. The creative man or poet lives in an existence that animates everything that he has seen since childhood. There is a correspondence between the external material objects or nature and mental images of the poet. Shelley explaining how he became a poet and what material or images he used for his poetry, wrote:

'I have been familiar from boyhood with mountains and lakes and the sun, and the solitude of forests: Danger, which sports upon the brink of precipices, has been my playmate. I have trodden the glaciers of the Alps, and lived under the eye of Mont Blanc. I have been a wanderer amongst distant fields. I have sailed down mighty rivers, and seen the sun rise and set, and the stars come forth, whilst I have sailed night and day down a rapid stream among mountains. I have seen populous cities, and have watched the passions which rise and spread, and sink and change, amongst assembled multitudes of men. I have seen the theatre of the more visible ravages of tyranny and war; cities and villages reduced to scattered groups of black and roofless houses, and the naked inhabitants sitting famished upon their desolated thresholds. I have conversed with living men of genius. The poetry of ancient Greece and Rome, and modern Italy, and our own country, has been to me, like external nature, a passion and an enjoyment. Such are the sources from which the material for the imagery of my Poem have been drawn.' 1.

In other words the poets animate all sensible objects which exist in their environment. Shelley and Blake share similar ideas about correspondence and animism, Shelley arguing that an essential attribute of poetry was

'the power of awakening in others sensations

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1. Shelley, The Revolt of Islam, op. cit., p.34.



like those which animate my own bosom,.....' 1.  
 the

The images and language that the poet uses are /mental form of the sensible objects and social background.

'....the spirit which animates the social institutions of mankind.....' 2.

In the 'unfallen world', says Northrop Frye,

'objects of perception are alive and intelligent, and a faint echo of the animation of that world' survives in the animism of primitive religion. The nymphs, satyrs and fauns of Classical mythology are older and more authentic than the Olympian hierarchy. With the separation of existence and perception, however, the natural object became attached to the latter and its spirit or Genius to the former, so that gradually a belief in invisible deities grew up. The eleventh plate of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, the paragraph beginning "The ancient Poets animated all sensible objects with Gods or Geniuses", traces this process with a clarity that might impress even a modern student of the subject.' 3.

The idea of 'animism' is not exclusive to the romantic writers in the 18th century. Blake's idea is regarded as a universal characteristic of man by anthropological research.

Edward Tylor, for example, in his Religion in Primitive Culture, discussing animism and the primitive view of the souls of men, beasts and things, writes:

'....strange as such a notion may seem to us at first sight, if we place ourselves by an effort in the intellectual position of an uncultured tribe, and examine the theory of object - souls from their point of view, we shall hardly pronounce it irrational...

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1. Ibid., p.35 (our emphasis).

2. Ibid., p.37.

3. Northrop Frye, Fearful Symmetry, (Princeton University Press 1947), p.61.



the primitive stage of thought in which personality and life are ascribed not to men and beasts only, but to things. It has been shown how what we call inanimate objects - rivers, stones, trees, weapons, and so forth - are treated as living intelligent beings, talked to, propitiated, punished for the harm they do'. 1.

The patterns of thought in ancient and modern people or uncultured and cultured people are the same; they differ only in that the objects or tools of thinking have changed. Man animates objects according to his intellectual needs. Man passes and objects change or are replaced by different kinds but the pattern or form of thought in man still remains the same and unchangeable. The creative mind or 'Poetic Genius' animates objects according to its position and intellectual needs. In other words objects change but 'Poetic Genius' ever remains the same. Blake discusses this in detail in his later writings. In A Vision of the Last Judgement, for example, he writes:

'Man Passes on, but States remain for Ever;...  
..... It ought to be understood that the  
Persons, Moses & Abraham, are not here meant, but  
the States Signified by those Names .....' 2.

By the term 'state' Blake means the state of attraction to and repulsion against an object. He has defined this clearly in his book of Milton:

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1. Sir Edward Burnett Tylor, 'Religion in Primitive Culture' (3rd edition London 1891) vol. 2, p.61.
  2. A Vision of the Last Judgement. (K. pp.606-607).

'Judge then of thy Own Self; thy Eternal Lineaments  
 explore,  
 What is Eternal & what Changeable, & what Annihilable.  
 The Imagination is not a State: it is the Human  
 Existence itself  
 Affection or Love becomes a State when divided from  
 Imagination.  
 The Memory is a State always, & the Reason is a  
 State  
 Created to be Annihilated & a new Ratio Created.  
 Whatever can be Created can be Annihilated: Forms  
 cannot:  
 The Oak is cut down by the Ax, the Lamb falls by  
 the Knife,  
 But their Forms Eternal Exist For-ever.' 1.

The form of thought in Man is 'Eternal' and unchange-  
 :able. The traveller is the same though the roads differ,  
 Man passes through states or memories. The passive  
 personality like Swedenborg animates his limited memories.  
 He sees only a portion or changeable object as opposed to  
 'Imagination' or the unchangeable 'Form' which is 'Human  
 Existence'. The poet sees God as infinite but the Priest  
 sees Him as a finite being.

Blake's distinction between what is changeable and  
 what unchangeable in man has been expounded by a modern  
 writer. Claude Levi-Strauss writes:

'Prevalent attempts to explain alleged differences  
 between the so-called primitive mind and scientific  
 thought have restored to qualitative differences  
 between the working processes of the mind in both  
 cases, while assuming that the entities which they  
 were studying remained very much the same. If our

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1. Milton Book the Second, plate 32, ls. 30-38.



interpretation is correct, we are led toward a completely different view, namely, that the kind of logic in mythical thought is as vigorous as that of modern science, and that the difference lies, not in the quality of intellectual process, but in the nature of the things to which it is applied. This is well in agreement with the situation known to prevail in the field of technology: what makes a steel axe superior to a stone axe is not that the first one is quite different from stone. In the same way we may be able to show that the same logical processes operate in myth as in science, and that man has always been thinking equally well; the improvement lies, not in an alleged progress of man's mind but in the discovery of new areas to which it may apply its unchanged and unchanging power'. 1.

The creative mind or 'Poetic Genius' is, according to Blake, similarly unchangeable, but the objects about which we think change. Swedenborg and Blake, for example, both have creative minds but Swedenborg's mind, because of his upbringing and environment, has been fettered by his passive memories or what is changeable. Thus the finite has replaced the infinite, and what is changeable has enslaved what is unchangeable or eternal Human Existence. Blake takes up this discussion in Plates 12-13 of The Marriage.

3. Plates 12-13. 'Poetic Genius as the First Principle of Human Perception'

'The Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel dined with me, and I asked them how they dared so roundly to assert that God spoke to them; and whether they did not think that they would be misunderstood, & so be the cause of imposition.

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1. Claude Levi-Strauss, Structural Anthropology  
Translated from the French by Claire Jacobson and  
Brooke Arundfest Schoepf. (London 1963), p.230.

' Isaiah answer'd: "I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical perception; but my senses discover'd the infinite in every thing, and as I was then perswaded, & remain confirm'd, that the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God, I cared not for consequences, but wrote."

' Then I asked: "does a firm perswasion that a thing is so, make it so?"

' He replied: "All poets believe that it does, & in ages of imagination this firm perswasion removed mountains; but many are not capable of a firm perswasion of any thing."

' Then Ezekiel said: "The philosophy of the east taught the first principles of human perception: some nations held one principle for the origin, & some another: we of Israel taught that the Poetic Genius (as you now call it) was the first principle and all the others merely derivative, which was the cause of our despising the Priests & Philosophers of other countries, and prophecyng that all Gods would at last be proved to originate in ours & to be the tributaries of the Poetic Genius; it was this that our great poet, King David, desired so fervently & invokes so pathetic'ly, saying by this he conquers enemies & governs kingdoms; and we so loved our God, that we cursed in his name all the deities of surrounding nations, and asserted that they had rebelled: from these opinions the vulgar came to think that all nations would at last be subject to the jews."

"' "This," said he, "like all firm perswasions, is come to pass; for all nations believe the jews' code and worship the jews' god, and what greater subjection can be?"

' I heard this with some wonder, & must confess my own conviction. After dinner I ask'd Isaiah to favour the world with his lost works; he said none of equal value was lost. Ezekiel said the same of his.

' I also asked Isaiah what made him go naked and barefoot three years? he answer'd: "the same thing that made our friend Diogenes, "the Grecian."

' I then asked Ezekiel why he eat dung, & lay so long on his right & left side? he answer'd, "the desire of raising other men into a perception of the infinite:



this the North American tribes practise, & is he honest who resists his genius or conscience only for the sake of present ease or gratification?" ' 1.

In this part our purpose is to demonstrate that the plates 12 - 13 is also written in the context of Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, and is not merely 'a witty account of a dinner party', as John Beer has written recently,

'at which Blake questions the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel about their inspiration.' 2.

The argument in the plate seems twofold. Firstly Blake defends the honesty and humanity of the prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel in the face of the rigid social system of the priest Swedenborg who, while associating himself with the ancient prophets and discussing the superior quality of speech and languages in 'Heaven', concludes that:

'the discourse in hell are thus opposite to the discourses in heaven, wherefore the wicked cannot endure angelic discourse; ....infernal discourse is to the angels as a stinking odour which strikes the nostrils....' 3.

Blake, who is one of those in 'Hell', sits at ease with the prophets and wants to show that Isaiah and Ezekiel, unlike the priest, not only do not refuse to discourse with the people in 'Hell' but also dine with them, and share the enthusiasm and life of the active people. In other words the ancient prophets, unlike the Angels, worked and

1. M.H.H., Plates 12-13. (K. pp.153-4).
2. John Beer, Blake's Humanism (Manchester University Press 1968) p.54.
3. H.H., p.179, no.245.

encouraged 'The desire of raising other men into a perception of the infinite.'

Secondly Blake wants to disassociate the prophets from Swedenborg's other statement that the Lord 'spake with the prophets' and 'dictated' to them.<sup>1</sup> Blake asks Isaiah whether God had really spoken to him or dictated his writings. Isaiah answers:

'I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical perception; but my senses discover'd the infinite in every thing, and as I was then perswaded, & remain confirm'd, that the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God, I cared not for consequences, but wrote.' 2.

In other words God, contrary to the God of the priest, exists within man. He represents the active and creative being or man. 'God only acts and is, in existing beings or men.' This leads to the difference between the priest and the prophet or the difference between the passive and limited memory principle and the active and creative imagination or poetic genius. The memory principle is based, as we have discussed in previous chapters, on 'negation' and imagination or poetic genius is based on 'contrary progression'.

Before we return and concentrate on the idea of 'contrary progression' we should examine Heaven and Hell closely to enable us to appreciate the textual correspondence between plates 12 - 14 and Heaven and Hell and fully understand the effect of Blake's satirical dinner

1. Ibid., p.185, no.254.

2. M.F.H., Plates 12-13, (K. pp.153-4).



party with Isaiah and Ezekiel.

In Swedenborg's system the active life of 'Hell', as we have seen before, is opposite or 'contrary' to 'Heaven'. The people in 'Hell' love the self and the world, but those in 'Heaven' love the Lord. Swedenborg supports his case against those in 'Hell' by using arguments and exhortations derived from the Bible and the teaching of Jesus and the Old Testament prophets such as Isaiah, Ezekiel, David and what he generally calls 'prophets'. In Heaven and Hell occur statements such as:

'....all the luminaries of light in the heavens I will darken over thee, and I will give darkness upon thy hand,' Ezekiel xxxii, 7,8.(1).

'The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, but the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, as the light of seven days,' Isaiah xxx, 26. 2.

'....I will darken the sun in his rising, and the moon shall not make her light to shine,' Isaiah xiii, 10. 3.

'....Hence it is, that to adore the sun of the world and the moon, and to bow down to them, signifies, in the Word, to love self and the falses grounded in the love of self....,' Ezekiel viii, 15,16,18. 4.

'....There are such things in the heavens, may be manifest from those which were seen by the prophets: and by Ezekiel....' 5.

'Peace shall have no end on the throne of David, and on his Kingdom,....' Isaiah ix, 7.

'I will raise up to David a just branch, and he shall reign a King,....' 6.

1. H.H., p.91, no.119.  
2. Ibid., p.90, no.119.  
3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p.93, no.122.  
5. Ibid., p.128, no.171.  
6. Ibid., p.159, no.216.

'They ask of me the JUDGEMENT of JUSTICE. They desire the approach of God,' Isaiah lviii, 2. 1.

'Inasmuch as the angels have such power, therefore they are called powers; as in David: 'Bless Jehovah ye angels most powerful in strengths,' 2.

'I have been informed in what manner the Lord spake with the prophets, by (or through) whom the Word was communicated; he did not speak with them as with the ancients by an influx into their interiors,....' 3.

'Since such was the state of the spirits who spake with the prophets,....' 4.

'That papers written in heaven appeared also to the prophets, is manifest from Ezekiel:....' 5.

These are just random examples taken from Heaven and Hell. Nonetheless the plates 12 - 13 apparently refer to the chapters 'concerning the speech of angels with man' and 'concerning writing in heaven'. Swedenborg argues that the language of every man is based on his memories.

'....the thought of man coheres with his memory, and speech flows from that source....' 6.

It follows that 'Heaven' and 'Hell' have different languages. There are two kinds of languages: the language of Angels and of human beings. The

'angels are not able to utter a single expression of human language....and besides, human language is natural, and they are spiritual, and spiritual beings cannot utter anything naturally:....' 7.

But when the Angels speak to men they talk or conjoin to

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1. Ibid., p.159, no.216.

2. Ibid., p.168, no.229.

3. Ibid., p.185, no.254.

4. Ibid., p.186, no.254.

5. Ibid., p.189, no.258.

6. Ibid., p.179, no.246.

7. Ibid., p.180, no.246.



their spiritual body and this is provided by the Lord because

'with every man there should be attendant angels and spirits, and that man should be ruled by them from the Lord,.....' 1.

In other words man communicates with the Lord through the spirits and Angels. Everything and inspiration comes from one 'single fountain of life which is the Lord,' 2.

Swedenborg repudiates the individuality or creative spirit which acts independently in man. The people who believe in the Holy Spirit in everyman are called 'visionaries' and 'enthusiasts':

'.....such persons are visionaries and enthusiasts, and believe every spirit whom they hear to be the Holy Spirit, when yet they are enthusiastic spirits.' 3.

Swedenborg regarded these as dangerous and wicked:

'Such spirits are falses as truths, and because they see them, they persuade themselves that they are truths, and likewise persuade those with whom they flow in: and whereas those spirits began also to press the persuasion of evils, and were also obeyed,..... enthusiastic spirits are distinguished from other spirits by this, that they believe themselves to be the Holy Spirit, and that the things which they say are divine: those spirits do not hurt man, because man honours them with divine worship. I have also occasionally discoursed with them, and on such occasions were discovered the wicked devices which they infused into their worshippers: they dwell together to the left in a desert place.' 4.

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1. Ibid., pp.180-1, no.247.

2. Ibid., p.10, no.9.

3. Ibid., p.182, no.249.

4. Ibid., pp.182-3, no.249.

Blake has, apparently, taken the word 'persuade' from this passage. The passage conveys the social conflict of the time between the church and state on one hand and their opponents such as Pietists or Moravians on the other. By the word enthusiasts apparently Swedenborg meant the Pietists or Moravians who supported the lower class against the established church and state. They all reacted against the traditional emphasis on dogma and scholastic arguments and instead taught that true Christianity lay in a more inward and enthusiastic form of worship, simpler and more heartfelt. True Christianity was, moreover, active and based on a practical life which was regarded as the 'most essential mark of Christian life'.<sup>1.</sup> Both Pietists and Moravians also sought, as we have pointed out in the first Chapter, to remove the wide gulf between the official clergy and the lay classes.

The 'desert' is the place where 'Hell' exists or miners live:

'Some hells appear to the view like cave and dens, such as wild beasts inhabit in forests:.... There are likewise wildernesses, where nothing is to be seen but what is barren and sandy.....' 2.

In Sweden, Pietists and Moravians waged war against the established church and her indifference to the unjust social relationships. Their teachings appealed to the lower classes and in 1720 they created a great stir in

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1. K.S. Pinson, op.cit., p.14.

2. H.H., pp.509-10, no.586, see also pp.508-13, nos.585-8.



1. Sweden. Swedenborg, perhaps for these social reasons, regarded enthusiasts as very persuasive and dangerous. After discussing the differences between 'enthusiasts' or 'visionaries' and Angels he says that to speak with spirits or enthusiasts

'at this day is rarely granted, because it is dangerous'. 2.

But

'to discourse with the angels of heaven is granted only to those who are principled in truths derived from good, especially who are in the acknowledgement of the Lord,....from which consideration it is evident, that to discourse with the angels of heaven is not granted to any but those whose interiors are opened by divine truths even to the Lord, for the Lord flows in into those truths with man,.....' 3.

In other words, those who acknowledge the Lord or the passive memories of the priest are allowed to speak to the Angels and 'see also those things which are in heaven....' 4. but those who do not acknowledge the passive God or priest are not granted to speak to Angels. Those who lead an active life and depend on their own energy for their natural needs are not allowed to speak to the Lord but those who receive all necessities of life gratis are granted to speak to the Angels. This leads Swedenborg to say that man either turns himself to the love of self and the world,

1. See for detail chapter I, supra.
2. H.H., p.181, no.249.
3. Ibid., p.183, no.250.
4. Ibid., p.184, no.252.

for example such as those of Moravians and those of 'Hell': or to love of the Lord, such as those who are in 'Heaven'. The prophets thus had conjunction with the Angels of 'Heaven' and the Lord spoke with them:

'I have been informed in what manner the Lord spake with the prophets, by (or through) whom the Word was communicated; he did not speak with them as with the ancients by an influx into their interiors, but by spirits who were sent to them, whom the Lord filled with his aspect, and thus inspired words which they dictated to the prophets,.....' 1.

This is apparently the starting point of plates 12 - 13. Blake satirizing Swedenborg's passive concept of the prophets begins:

'The prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel dined with me, and I asked them how they dared so roundly to assert that God spoke to them,.....'

In this passage Blake satirizes two of Swedenborg's ideas. He firstly pokes fun at the contention that the prophets are among the Angels. Secondly, Blake shows that the prophets, contrary to the passive idea of the priest, were active and creative men. Thus he defends their creative personality against the passive memories of the priest. The prophet creates hope, inspires people and unites with them but the priest negates people against his passive memories and creates his rigid social system of 'Heaven' and 'Hell'.

Swedenborg, as we have pointed out while discussing

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1. Ibid., p.185, no.254.



'The Argument,' read the Bible with the Angels in 'Heaven', and saw it as a kind of spiritual handbook. Blake, reading it with the working people in 'Hell' regarded it as a living story. The ancient prophets were to him full of human feeling, of hope and creative enthusiasm. They praised the people's work and creative energy against idle life and abstraction.

'Roses are planted where thorns grow,  
And on the barren heath  
Sing the honey bees.'

To the prophet creation was based on an active life. The active life is linked with 'imagination' or active 'contrary progression' or creation. There is<sup>a</sup> difference between active imagination or 'contraries' and passive imagination or 'contraries'. The active 'imagination' or 'contraries' is based on the creative mind. Reason sees the roses and thorns, ease and work as contraries. Imagination guides man towards his desire, through practical and creative life. The passive 'imagination' or 'contraries' is based on passive memories which are not based on practical life. The passive personality desires and loves only those things with which his dominating love agrees. He loves the roses but avoids being pricked by the thorn. He loves joy, delight and ease but he does not work for them. He negates the thorn and work as undesirable and evil, their existence springing from 'Hell.' All this means active 'imagination' or 'contraries' are 'infinite' but the passive imagination or rigid 'contraries'

are 'finite.' The priest sees God in his own limited passive memories but the prophet sees God which 'only acts and is, in existing beings or men.' Thus the prophet Isaiah answer'd:

'I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical perception, but my senses discover'd the infinite in every thing....'

The prophet Isaiah sees God in active life and in reality or nature. To see the 'barren heath' and 'honey bees' in a blossomed land together is imagination or a process of creation. Man converted 'barren heath' to blossomed land.

#### 4. 'The Eye Sees More Than the Heart Knows'

The difference between the priest and prophet is the difference between the limited Reason (Urizen: your reason) and 'Poetic Genius'. The priest associates his authority with Divine Providence and sacred books but the prophet depends on his creative power and personal revelation.

1.  
Max Weber in his book The Sociology of Religion discusses the difference between the priest and prophet, and writes:

'.....the personal call is the decisive element distinguishing the prophet from the priest. The latter lays claim to authority by virtue of his service in a sacred tradition, while the prophet's claim is based on personal revelation and charisma. It is no accident that almost no prophets have emerged from the priestly class.' 2.

1. First published in Germany in 1922.

2. Max Weber, The Sociology of Religion (London 1966) p.46.



It was on this personal call or persuasion, the creative genius of man that Blake, among other Romantic poets, laid stress. It conveys the same idea as the 'imagination'. Blake by the 'age of imagination', probably means the period before 'a system was formed' and 'began Priesthood'.

'The period of the Older Israelitic prophecy at about the time of Elijah was an epoch of strong prophetic propaganda throughout the Near East and Greece.' 1.

There ancient prophets and poets, by their personal gifts, inspired the people in their active life. If they failed in practice the poets or prophets created their desire and hopes in 'imagination.' The imagination filled valleys, diverted rivers and removed mountains.

'....in ages of imagination this firm persuasion removed mountains..'

All this means the prophets put unlimited and creative imagination above an abstract knowledge of sense principle and passive life.

Ezekiel said:

'The philosophy of the East taught the first principles of human perception:....'

By these principles Blake, apparently, means those he has already propounded in 'All Religions are One' (etched about 1788) against Natural Religion and sense principle.

'The Argument. As the true method of knowledge is experiment, the true faculty of knowing must be the faculty which experiences. This faculty I treat of.

'Principle 1st. That the Poetic Genius is the true Man, and that the body or outward form of Man is derived from the Poetic Genius. Likewise that the forms of all things are derived from their Genius, which by the Ancients was call'd an Angel & Spirit & Demon.

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1. Ibid., p.48.

'Principle 2nd. As all men are alike in outward form, so (and with the same infinite variety) all are alike in the Poetic Genius.

'Principle 3rd. No man can think, write, or speak from his heart, but he must intend truth. Thus all sects of Philosophy are from the Poetic Genius adapted to the weaknesses of every individual.

'Principle 4th. As none by travelling over known lands can find out the unknown, so from already acquired knowledge Man could not acquire more: therefore an universal Poetic Genius exists.

'Principle 5th. The Religions of all Nations are derived from each Nation's different reception of the Poetic Genius, which is everywhere call'd the Spirit of Prophecy.

'Principle 6th. The Jewish & Christian Testaments are an original derivation from the Poetic Genius; this is necessary from the confined nature of bodily sensation.

'Principle 7th. As all men are alike (tho' infinitely various), So all Religions; &, as all similars, have one source.

'The true Man is the source, he being the Poetic Genius.' 1.

These principles are a brief and concise summary of Blake's philosophy of knowledge or epistemology. Firstly Blake believed that the true method of knowledge is 'experiment,' and that

'the true faculty of knowing must be the faculty which experiences.'

Secondly he believed that

'the true Man is the source, he being the Poetic Genius'

or creative mind, and that

'all are alike in the Poetic Genius.'

Before we return to The Marriage of Heaven and Hell we should

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1. All Religions are One, (K. p.98).



briefly discuss these principles because The Marriage and other writings of Blake are also based on them.

In his statement that the true method of knowledge is experiment and the true faculty of knowing must be the faculty which experiences; 'experience' is the key word. By the term Blake means what man experiences both practically and intellectually in his surrounding world or society. By these practical experiences man gains knowledge of his environment. In other words man acquires knowledge by experience. It follows that what man learns about events and things by hearsay and from books is different from what he learns by practical experience and is passive.

Passive experience is that which is not experienced by the creative mind personally and individually. It is abstract because it is not practised and is experience in name only. Locke's theory of 'experience' is passive because he bases 'moral fitness' on the information that we have received from others directly or indirectly. For him, education is the direct source of information. The other source is the impressions received from the social environment. By contrast, Blake's Songs of Innocence, for example, are the direct product of practical experience. The experience of Innocence is personally acquired but the experience of Songs of Experience is only taught and is passive or abstract. The father talks of love and humanity but in practice acts against love and humanity by his

selfishness. But in The Songs of Innocence, true love and human brotherhood are experienced and felt rather than taught. The Father and Children, shepherd and flock live together. Blake did not trust formal education, probably because of its abstract nature.

The Songs of Experience for example represent the society where morality is taught but those who teach morality act against morality. Blake called this condition: 'The Human Abstract.' But in the Songs of Innocence 'mercy, Pity, Peace, and love' are seen and experienced. Blake calls this condition 'The Divine Image' - The 'image' that every innocent child and person has in his mind. This 'image' is Poetic Genius or creative character. In the Songs of Experience this creative character or Poetic Genius has fallen and is replaced by abstract morality or passive teaching.

The Songs of Experience represent the mechanical social system of the eighteenth century which, as we have seen in the first chapter, was based on the philosophy of sense principle or experience. The word 'Experience' is apparently meant to echo Locke's philosophy which Blake identified with the mechanical system. Locke stressed the importance of 'experience' merely by the sense principle. This principle was the foundation upon which Locke also based his epistemology or theory of knowledge. In his Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Locke stresses the word 'Experience':



'All ideas come from sensation or reflection. Let us then suppose the mind to be, as we say, white paper, void of all characters, without any ideas; how comes it to be furnished? Whence comes it by that vast store, which the busy and boundless fancy of man has pointed on it with an almost endless variety? Whence has it all the materials of reason and knowledge. To this I answer, in one word, from EXPERIENCE; in that all our knowledge is founded, and from that it ultimately derives itself.' 1.

In this passage the word 'Experience' is obviously the key word. Its philosophy supported the rigid social system of the age. Thus the word 'Experience' in the Songs of Experience represents both Lockean philosophy and the social system which was based on this philosophy. When Blake attacks Locke and Newton he is, in fact, attacking the social system which was bolstered by their mechanical philosophy. The Songs of Experience, therefore, mirror a society based on the philosophy of 'EXPERIENCE', and the word itself represents the social system founded on the limited experience of the minority in 'Heaven' working against the interest of the people in 'Hell'.

Locke stressed the importance of experience in the working processes of the sense principle, but Blake placed emphasis on what the senses work upon. In other words, most men possess all their five senses, but they do not of

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1. John Locke An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, edited by A.S. Pringle-Pattison (Oxford 1928), p.42.

necessity all share the same experiences. Blake and Swedenborg both had the use of their five senses, but their impressions and experiences were different because, as we have seen in the first chapter, of their differing social backgrounds. In Visions of the Daughters of Albion, repudiating the sense principle which has been used as an apology for and justification of the social system, Blake writes:

"With what sense is it that the chicken shuns the  
ravenous hawk?  
"With what sense does the tame pigeon measure out the  
expanse?  
"With what sense does the bee form cells? have not the  
mouse & frog  
"Eyes and ears and sense of touch? yet are their  
habitations  
"And their pursuits as different as their forms and  
as their joys.  
"Ask the wild ass why he refuses burdens, and the  
meek camel  
"Why he loves man: is it because of eye, ear, mouth,  
or skin,  
"Or breathing nostrils? No, for these the wolf and  
tyger have.  
"Ask the blind worm the secrets of the grave, and why  
her spires  
"Love to curl round the bones of death; and ask the  
rav'nous snake  
"Where she gets poison, & the wing'd eagle why he loves  
the sun;  
"And then tell me the thoughts of man, that have been  
hid of old." ' 1.

All this means that all men possess five senses, but they do not of necessity all share the same experience. Eyes see many things but the heart knows its particular delight

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1. Visions of Daughters of Albion (K. p. 191).



which is from the 'joys of riches and ease.' <sup>1.</sup> Poetic Genius is the Heart.  
 'The Eye sees more than the Heart Knows'.

5. 'Poetic Genius' or Imagination as an Instrument of Moral Good

The second principle that

'the true Man is the source, he being the Poetic Genius'

and that

'all men are alike in the Poetic Genius', seeks to convey, by stressing the equal creative mental power of all men, the idea that difference between men lies mainly in their environment and the objects which their minds use.

There are two kinds of principles: one is limited and passive, the other is unlimited active and creative. The former is based on the sense principle, the latter on Poetic Genius.

'Some nations' says Ezekiel, 'held one principle for the origin, and some another: we of Israel taught that the Poetic Genius (as you now call it) was the first principle and all the others merely derivative, which was the cause of our despising the Priests and Philosophers of other countries, and prophesying that all Gods would at last be proved to originate in ours and to be the tributaries of The Poetic Genius; it was this that our great poet, King David, desired so fervently and invokes so pathetically, saying by this he conquers enemies and governs Kingdoms,.....'

In other words the

'Religions of all Nations are derived from each Nation's different reception of the Poetic Genius,'

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1. Visions of The Daughters of Albion, plate 4, 1.21, (K. p.192).

the  
and/Israelites held Poetic Genius as the origin and  
regarded sense principle or outward body/<sup>as</sup>merely derivative.  
They believed all Gods would finally 'be proved to originate'  
in the Poetic Genius. This idea served as a foundation  
for monotheism. The poets, like King David, appealed to  
the creative power of Poetic Genius and believed that it  
conquers enemies and overcomes human difficulties. But  
later on

'from these opinions the vulgar came to think that  
all nations would at last be subject to the Jews.'

In other words the outward form or name was divided from  
its creative spirit or Poetic Genius by a literal inter-  
pretation. Thus the created or derived form was  
established to act against the creator or Poetic Genius.  
The prophet Ezekiel attempted to unite nations by  
prophesying that

'all Gods would at last be proved to originate in ...  
The Poetic Genius'

but the priest later on propounded the outward body or  
'derivative' form as opposed to the Poetic Genius or 'true  
Man.'

'This' said Ezekiel 'like all firm persuasions,  
is come to pass; for all nations believe the Jews'  
code and worship the Jews' God, and what greater  
subjection can be?'

Thus the God of the prophet Ezekiel is different from that  
of the priest Swedenborg. The God of the prophet is and  
acts in all men and is creative but Swedenborg's God is  
limited and passive. One originates from Poetic Genius,  
the other from passive memories.



In the Plate 12-13 Blake attempts to separate the creative God of the ancient prophets from the passive God of Swedenborg - who is God of 'negation'. To show what we mean by passive, abstract God of 'negation' we should return to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell.

One of Swedenborg's chief characteristics is his assumption that all power is derived from divine sources. The Angels' understanding springs from the Lord and so whatever they do is right.

The Lord also rules man through the Angels who act upon the 'understanding and will', the spiritual part of man, which in turn governs man's physical part. What the spiritual thinks

'that the mouth and tongue speak, and what he wills, this the body acts' 1.

Swedenborg believed that every action of man is directed from above. He

'cannot even stir a step without the influx of heaven'. 2.

He thought himself completely in the hands of the superior power

'it having been granted to the angels to move my steps, my actions, my tongue, and speech, at their will, and this by influx into my will and thought, confirming me by experience in the conviction that of myself I could do nothing.' 3.

Since God has sent the Angels to lead Swedenborg,

1. H.H., p. 166, no.228.
2. Ibid., p.167, no.228.
3. Ibid.

whatever he does is directed and approved by God.

The Angels are all powerful in the spiritual world and are tools to carry out the Lord's commands. If the Lord orders that thousands in 'Hell' should be punished, the command is carried out by the Angels because he rules 'Hell' through them. Indeed

'if anything in that world makes resistance, which is necessary to be removed because it is contrary to divine order, they cast it down and overturn it by a mere exertion of the will and a look ..... I have seen also some hundred thousands of evil spirits dispersed and cast into hell by them: multitude is of no avail against them, no arts, cunning confederacies, for they see all things, and in a moment dash them in pieces'.

The Angels are equally powerful in the natural world.

There they have

'brought destruction on whole armies.'

They have

'induced a pestilence of which seventy thousand died .....' 1.

Swedenborg supports his argument by using David as witness:

'The angel stretched out his hand against Jerusalem to destroy it, but Jehovah repented of the evil and said to the angel who destroyed the people, it is enough, withhold now thy hand: and David saw the angel who smote the people, 2nd Samuel, XXIV 15,16,17. .... Inasmuch as the angels have such power, therefore they are called powers; as in David: 'Bless Jehovah ye angels most powerful in strength,' Psalm CIII.20. 2.

Blake's statement that '....our great poet, King David, desired so fervently & invokes so pathetic'ly, saying by this he conquers enemies & governs Kingdoms;....

1. H.H., p.168, no.229.

2. Ibid.



from these opinions the vulgar came to think that all nations would at last be subject to the jews'

is apparently related to the above quoted passage from Heaven and Hell.

King David appealed to Poetic Genius, but Swedenborg is typical of the 'vulgar' who came to think that all nations would at last be subject to the Jews. Swedenborg would send Roman Catholics, Muslims (or Mahomedans, as Swedenborg terms them), Quakers and Moravians, into exile, and place them in the 'most remote hells'.<sup>1</sup> Blake identifies Swedenborg's religion with the 'Jews' code' and his God with Jehovah.

In Plates 12-13 Ezekiel, Isaiah, David, and Diogenes represent creative characters or Poetic Genius.

The creative character or Poetic Genius is both intellectual and practical. It is active and creative in the social and practical life, and its creation is boundless. There is no end to the creation of man and it is the Poetic Genius or 'imagination' which sees this infinite creation. Blake asked Ezekiel why

'he eat dung & lay so long on his right and left side?'

He answer'd

'the desire of raising other men into a perception of the infinite:.....is he honest who resists his genius or conscience only for the sake of present ease or gratification?'

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1. See for example, H.H., p.511, no.537 and p.443, no.442 for further details see also The Last Judgement 'Mahomet': p.45, no.68-70, 'Quakers': pp.56-7, no. 83-5 'Moravians': pp.57-9, no.88.

The question corresponds to 'The Argument' and the answer accordingly is negative:

'Once meek, and in a perilous path,  
The just man kept his course along

.....

Till the villain left the paths of ease,  
To walk in perilous paths, and drive  
The just man into barren climes.'

Blake identifies the Poetic Genius or 'imagination' with the 'meek', 'just', 'honest', conscious man, 'true man' and God. In his Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love Blake responds to the statement that

'the negation of God constitutes Hell, and in the Christian World the Negation of the Lord's Divinity',

commenting

'The Negation of the Poetic Genius.' 1.

Blake's concept of the moral value of the Poetic Genius or imagination is, among other Romantic Poets, shared by Shelley:

'A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must be his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination,.....' 2.

Imagination is the instrument of moral good and honesty because contrary to limited memory principle, it sees all men alike.

'A poet' says Shelley 'participates in the external, the infinite, and the one: ..... ' 3.

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1. Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love, (K.p.90).
  2. Percy Bysshe Shelley, The Prose Works. Edited by Richard Herne Shepherd, Vol.II (London 1912) pp.11-12.
  3. Ibid., p.19.



All this means that the sense principle is limited and morally evil but the Poetic Genius is creative and morally good. The sense principle negates and divides but imagination creates and unites. Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, as we have discussed in previous chapters is based on memory or sense principle but The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is based on imagination. The creative faculty or imagination cannot create unless the passive memories (or 'negation') are cast out and the passive memories cannot be cast out, man cannot be morally good, unless he acts and creates. This is the theme of Plate 14:

- 'The ancient tradition that the world will be consumed in fire at the end of six thousand years is true, as I have heard from Hell.
- ' For the cherub with his flaming sword is hereby commanded to leave his guard at tree of life; and when he does, the whole creation will be consumed and appear infinite and holy, whereas it now appears finite & corrupt.
- ' This will come to pass by an improvement of sensual enjoyment.
- ' But first the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul is to be expunged; this I shall do by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid.
- ' If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite.
- ' For man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern.' 1.

In this passage the poet shows the Angel Swedenborg how to cleanse his perceiving eyes or the eyes of

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1. M.H.H., Plate 14. (K. p.154).

imagination and thus be able to see the 'infinite.' Firstly the dichotomy of body and soul or object and deity 'is to be expunged'. This can be done by the marriage of 'Heaven' or 'Delight' and intellectual life with 'Hell' or 'Energy' and practical life. Blake himself does this by working or printing. Blake invented his own method of printing and supported his wife and himself by this way. These kind of manual tasks would seem 'infernal' to the Angels in 'Heaven' but to Blake 'are salutary and medicinal,' The artist depends on his creative work to cast out all passive memories and abstract rules

'melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid.'

In other words 'the busy bee has no time for sorrow.' The creative character is like a traveller who moves forward and therefore has no time to turn back or contemplate his limited and passive memories. Once the mind is in motion all memories also become active and move on with the traveller as one.

When the creative mind is born the 'cherub with his flaming sword' or the negative reasoning power which is based on passive memories leaves 'his guard at tree of life' or Good and Evil. It is passive, limited memories that cause the fall of creative man, for

'man has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern.'

Plate 14 is also written in the context of Heaven and Hell and is, apparently, referring to the chapter 'concerning the speech of Angels with Man.' In this chapter, while



discussing how Angels speak with man through man's memory because everybody has his own memory, writes:

'.....the ancients had an opinion, that after some thousands of years they should return into their former life, and into all its operations, and likewise that they had so returned, which they concluded from this circumstance, that occasionally there had occurred to them as it were a recollection of things which yet they never either saw or heard, which came to pass in consequence of spirits flowing in from their own memory into their ideas of thought.' 1.

The word 'ancients' and phrases 'thousand years' and 'come to pass' in Plate 14 are inspired by this passage. (The 'cherub with his flaming sword' and 'his guard at tree of life' represent Angels' laws in 'Heaven' who guard and punish those in 'Hell' because of the love of self and of the world.) Although Swedenborg believed that everybody discourses according to his own memory and says that

'it is not allowed any angel and spirit to speak with man from his own memory' 2.

yet he negated the memory of those in 'Hell' as 'evil' and 'infernal'. The Angels are sent from the Lord to 'guard' men:

'....The angels of every society are sent to men, that they may guard them, and withdraw them from evil affections and consequent thoughts, and inspire them with good affections....They rule the deeds or works of men, removing,....evil intentions: ....' 3.

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1. H.H., p.188, no.256.
  2. H.H., p.187, no.256.
  3. H.H., p.322, no.391.

Again, while discussing the love and desire of men in 'Hell', Swedenborg writes:

'All the hells are closed towards that world, being open only through holes and clefts, and through wide gaps which are guarded, to prevent anyone coming out except by permission,.....' 1.

The 'cherub with his flaming sword' and 'his guard at tree of life' in Plate 14 satirically represents the Angels in 'Heaven' who guard men in 'Hell' from evil affections or the 'tree of life'.

Blake says to the Angel that if he wants to return to his former life, (or for all his passive memories to be consumed) then the cherub or Angel with his 'flaming sword' must 'leave his guard at the tree of life' (or stop accusing and punishing men in 'Hell' or coal-miners because of their so-called love of self and of the world while the Angel himself enjoys abundance in 'Heaven').

When the 'cherub' leaves his guard at the 'tree of life' or 'tree of good and evil' then the 'whole creation will be consumed and appear infinite and holy, whereas it now appears' to Swedenborg 'finite and corrupt'.

Blake who works in 'Hell' tells Swedenborg if he desires to return to former life and live as the ancients lived then he must improve his 'sensual enjoyment' by realising that the delight of 'Heaven' is not distinct

1. Ibid., p.354, no.428.



from the body. In other words

'Energy is the only life, and is from the  
Body;.....' 1.

To realise this he ought to work six days, as Blake did by printing, and rest on the seventh day. This will consume his created world of memory in fire at the 'end of six thousand years' or at the end of six days. Blake takes 'thousand years' from Swedenborg and satirically adding the number 'six' which, apparently, represents six days of the week. In other words active and creative work consumes all the passive and negative rules of the priest.

The artist Blake sees the seventh day as a day of ease and joy and can experience it fully in contrast to the labours of the previous days.

This vision makes the whole creation appear infinite and holy and it is this vision which is imagination or Poetic Genius. Imagination looks forward and is infinite whereas memory looks backward and is finite. Swedenborg sees only his own limited passive memories and abstract rules. In other words 'he has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern'. Imagination is based on 'contrary progression' but memory principle is based on 'negation'.

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1. M.H.H., op.cit. (K. p.149).

6. Science in 'Heaven' and 'Printing House in Hell'

When Blake attacks science he attacks abstract  
the  
knowledge and/rationalism of his time on which the science  
or knowledge of the Urizenic character is based:

'They began to weave curtains of darkness,  
They erected large pillars round the Void,  
With golden hooks fasten'd in the pillars;  
With infinite labour the Eternals  
A woof wove, and called it Science.' 1.

The word 'science' occurs frequently in Swedenborg's writings. By the word he means rationalism. Swedenborg was one of the many people in the eighteenth century who attempted to rationalise religion. This approach to religion was called the scientific approach.

In the eighteenth century 'science' corresponded to 'rationalism'. Knowledge or understanding based on the principle of sense perception or rationalism was called 'science'. It is this passive science that Blake attacks.

Swedenborg uses the word in the eighteenth-century sense:

'These three Degrees of Altitude are named Natural, Spiritual and Celestial.... Man, at his Birth, first comes into the natural Degree, and this increases in him by Continuity according to the Sciences, and according to the Understanding acquired by them, to the Summit of Understanding which is called Rational.'

Blake writes underneath the passage:

'Study Sciences till you are blind, Study intellectuals till you are cold, Yet science cannot teach intellect. Much less can intellect teach Affection. How foolish

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1. The First Book of Urizen, Plate 19, ls.5-10 (K.p.231).



then is it to assert that Man is born in only one degree, when that one degree is reception of the 3 degrees, two of which he must destroy or close up or they will descend; if he closes up the two superior, then he is not truly in the 3rd, but descends out of it into meer Nature or Hell.... Is it not also evident that one degree will not open the other, & that science will not open intellect,' .....1.

The word 'Nature or Hell' apparently means the womb of 'Nature' or natural memories in which there is a 'Void immense' with a burning fire or Hell.

'First I fought with the fire, consum'd  
Inwards into a deep world within:...' 2.

The word 'Nature' in this sense contrasts the 'Nature' which means reality and creation. In his 'Annotations to Swedenborg's The Wisdom of Angels Concerning Divine Providence' Blake wrote: 'Truth is Nature' against Swedenborg's statement that

'Nothing doth in general so contradict Man's  
natural and favourite Opinions as truth,....' 3.

'Nature' is 'truth' when it is based on active and creative energy in man. 'Nature is Truth' but it falls according to the weakness or idleness of every man. Mr. Hirsch apparently misses the point of the contrast between the two kinds of evidence of 'Nature' when he takes them as/change in the poet's opinion. 4.

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1. Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love, (K. p.93).
  2. The First Book of Urizen, Para.5, ls.15-17. (K. ed.224).
  3. Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Providence, (K. p.131).
  4. E.D. Hirsch, Jr., op. cit., p.54 and pp.58-9.

In the later writings of Blake the word 'science' also corresponds to rationalism and is the symbol of the mechanical system. In The French Revolution Blake states how reason and science were formed by the natural and abstract impressions of the reasoner:

'The law and gospel from fire and air, and eternal  
reason and science  
From the deep and the solid, and man lay his faded  
head down on the rock..' 1.

The words 'deep', 'solid' and 'rock' convey the external and rigid nature of impressions formed by the sense principle in a limited environment based on the rational or mechanical system of 'Heaven' and 'Hell'. The idle priest forms his laws and gospel from his abstract and passive impressions. The word 'fire' represents his presupposed self-righteous character and fury and 'air' his abstract teaching. In America (1793) Blake attacks the priest and his God who are

'unrestrain'd performers of the energies of nature;  
Till pity is become a trade, and generosity a science  
.....' 2.

These 'energies of nature' are the passive and devouring forces which contrast and work against the creative and prolific energy of nature in man. The priest has energy to devour and this energy or desire is based on his passive natural memories or 'Nature's wide womb' which is burning

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1. The French Revolution, l. 95, (K. p. 138).
  2. America, plate 11, l. 10, (K. ed. 200).



in a 'deep world within'.<sup>1.</sup> This devouring 'Nature' is passive and seeks 'joy without pain'<sup>2.</sup> or hard work.

In The Book of Ahania, which represents the divided selfhood and 'invisible lust'<sup>3.</sup> in the Urizenic character, the word 'science' again means knowledge based on the principle of sense perception. Urizen, by his science, forms the human soul in his own likeness. He plants his seeds, which represent the priest's internalized impressions, or science, among people.

'.....thou with thy lap full of seed,  
With thy hand full of generous fire  
Walked forth from the clouds of morning,  
On the virgins of springing joy,  
On the human soul to cast  
The seed of eternal science.' 4.

In The Four Zoas the word 'science' again stands for rationalism and Urizenic knowledge. The Urizenic character writes books by viewing his own 'Abyss' of natural impressions. He flees back, as we have seen before, to his natural memories. By means of this journey he views all the impressions that he had received from his environment in the past. The 'science' or knowledge of Urizen or fallen man is the reflection of these impressions in the depth of his memory:

1. The First Book of Urizen, para.5, 1.16, (K. p.224).
2. Ibid., para. 4, 1.10.
3. The Book of Ahania, Chap.I, para. 7, 1.30. (K.p.249).
4. The Book of Los, plate 5, para.12, 1.29-34 (K. p.255).

'Oft would he sit in a dark rift & regulate his books,  
 Or sleep such sleep as spirits eternal, wearied in  
 his dark  
 Tearful & sorrowful state; then rise, look out &  
 ponder  
 His dismal voyage, eyeing the next sphere tho' far  
 remote;  
 Then darting into the Abyss of night his venturous  
 limbs

Creating many a Vortex, fixing many a Science in the  
 deep.' 1.

It is this sort of knowledge in Swedenborg which Blake  
 satirizes in Plates 15-17 of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell:

'I was in a Printing house in Hell, & saw the method  
 in which knowledge is transmitted from generation  
 to generation.

'In the first chamber was a Dragon-Man, clearing away  
 the rubbish from a cave's mouth; within, a number  
 of Dragons were hollowing the cave.

'In the second chamber was a Viper folding round the  
 rock & the cave, and others adorning it with gold,  
 silver and precious stones.

'In the third chamber was an Eagle with wings and  
 feathers of air: he caused the inside of the cave  
 to be infinite; around were numbers of Eagle-like  
 men who built palaces in the immense cliffs.

'In the fourth chamber were Lions of flaming fire,  
 raging around & melting the metals into living  
 fluids.

'In the fifth chamber were Unnam'd forms, which cast  
 the metals into the expanse.

'There they were reciev'd by Men who occupied the  
 sixth chamber, and took the forms of books & were  
 arranged in libraries.' 2.

The Dragon-man represents natural man. The 'Cave', 'rock'  
 and 'air', as we have seen before, convey the natural, fixed

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1. The Four Zoas, Night the Sixth, ls.180-7 (K. p.316).
  2. M.H.H. (K. ed. pp.154-5).



and abstract knowledge or memories. The five chambers, probably represent the Abyss of five senses. The 'Lions of flaming fire' is the creative mind and energy which is imprisoned in the 'cave'. The imprisoned energy, like a lion, rages in the cage of natural memories 'melting' and 'metals' or fixed memories into 'living fluids' or fanciful memories. These fanciful memories of Angels are printed by 'Unnam'd forms' or those unimportant people who work in a 'Printing house in Hell'. Thus the knowledge of Angels took the 'forms of books and were arranged in libraries.' Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell is among these kind of books.

The Urizenic character's 'science' or knowledge contains the 'Seed' of division. He divides himself from other men by seeking refuge in his own passive memories.

'Man is a Worm; wearied with joy, he seeks the caves	of sleep
Among the Flowers of Beulah, in his selfish cold	repose
Forsaking Brotherhood & Universal love, in selfish	clay
Folding the pure wings of his mind, seeking the	places dark
Abstracted from the roots of Nature del. Science;	then inclos'd around
In walls of Gold we cast him like a Seed into the	Earth...' 1.

The science or knowledge, which is divided from active life and reality, is abstracted science. This abstract science destroys the creative personality or mind by its dividing nature. It enfolds the creative mind in its abstract

1. The Four Zoas, Night the Ninth, l. 626 (K. ed. 374.)

philosophy and causes the fall of the creative or 'Eternal man'. In The Four Zoas, 'Urthona', 'Luvah', 'Tharmas' and 'Urizen' represent the fallen elements in Man. Urthona corresponds to Los or Imagination, Luvah to Love, Tharmas to material rewards of energy or 'Parent pow'r' and Urizen to Reason. All these elements fall and lose their sight and power through the abstract science which covers them in its veil. Man becomes a doubting wanderer. The creative mind turns from reality and the active life; and 'Reason', who was like the rising sun ceases to rise daily and thus certainty changes to doubt and becomes Urizen. When 'Reason' falls, or the sun does not rise afresh every morning, then Luvah and Los or Love and Imagination fall also. The creative man descends into the bosom of 'Tharmas', the abstract memories, or 'Eternal Death'. Natural memories, as we shall see in Part II, are all important to the weary and fallen man. He forms his principle of 'Love' and 'Hate' from this 'Nature's wide womb'. He loves all his passive memories and hates the world of reality and active life. Thus man descends from active life and love into passive life and love. Luvah represents the passive love:

'They have surrounded me with walls of iron & brass,  
 Of God clothed in Luvah's garments! little  
 Of death Eternal, that we all go to Eternal Death,  
 To our Primeval Chaos in fortuitous concourse of  
 incoherent



Discordant principles of Love & Hate. I suffer  
 Because I love, for I [am del.] <sup>affliction</sup> was love, but  
 And Urizen, who was Faith & certainty, is chang'd  
 to Doubt;.....' 1.

The science or knowledge of Urizen is bitter and  
 negative for he walks only the path of hopelessness and  
 despair:

'....nor saw Urizen with a Globe of fire  
 Lighting his dismal journey thro' the pathless world  
 Writing in bitter tears & groans in books of iron &  
 brass.....' 2.

This abstract and bitter science is contrasted with the  
 'sweet' science; the former can change into the latter  
 when the natural and passive memories are supported by  
 man's creative energy. When this creative energy has  
 priority over the natural memories the latter become  
 inspiring as the 'earthworm renews the moisture of the  
 sandy plain.' <sup>3.</sup> By unity of passive memories and creative  
 energy, the subjective world with the objective and real  
 worlds the 'Eternal Man' or imagination rises again. The  
Four Zoas starts with the fall of 'Man' from the 'Universal  
 Brotherhood' into division or war and ends with the sweet  
 science of unity and brotherhood:

1. Ibid., Night the Second, l.99. et. seq.
2. Ibid., Night the Sixth, l.83. et. seq.
3. Ibid., Night the Second, l.368, et. seq.

'The Sun arises from his dewy bed, & the fresh airs  
 Play in his smiling beams giving the seeds of life  
 to grow,  
 And the fresh Earth beams forth ten thousand thousand  
 springs of life.  
 Urthona is arisen in his strength, no longer now  
 Divided from Enitharmon, no longer the Spectre Los,  
 Where is the Spectre of Prophecy? where the delusive  
 Phantom?  
 Departed: & Urthona rises from the ruinous Walls  
 In all his ancient strength to form the golden armour  
 of science  
 For intellectual War. The war of swords departed now,  
 The dark Religions are departed & sweet Science  
 reigns.' 1.

The word 'Science' in the creative sense of the word  
 is usually combined with the word 'Art' which represents  
 the active and social life. In his Annotations to Sir  
 Joshua Reynolds' 'Discourses' Blake wrote:

'The Arts & Sciences are the Destruction of Tyrannies  
 or Bad Governments. Why should A Good Government  
 endeavour to Depress what is its Chief & only  
 Support?

'The Foundation of Empire is Art & Science. Remove  
 them or Degrade them, & the Empire is No More.' 2.

All this means that the word 'Science' or knowledge  
 is used by Blake in two different ways; one is the passive  
 sense of the words and the other its creative meaning.

1. Ibid., Night the Ninth, l. 846-55,  
 (K. p.379).
2. Annotations to Sir Joshua Reynolds' Discourses,  
 (K. p.445).



7. 'Opposition Is True Friendship'

'The Giants who formed this world into its sensual existence, and now seem to live in it in chains, are in truth the causes of its life & the sources of all activity; but the chains are the cunning of weak and tame minds which have power to resist energy; according to the proverb, the weak in courage is strong in cunning.' 1.

The Giants are the active beings or human energies who create the material world.

The active people in Swedenborg's 'Hell', for example, are Giants or energies who have created the 'Heaven' or the sensual existence of the priest. Swedenborg talks of them as the 'mighty ones'.<sup>2.</sup> In general their

'faces are direful, and void of life like carcases, in some instances they are black, in some fiery like little torches, in some disfigured with pimples, warts, and ulcers, in several instances no face appears, but in its stead something hairy or bony, and in some cases teeth only are extant; their bodies also are monstrous ...' 3.

And again the

'gnashing of teeth, which are mentioned in the word as the portion of those who are in hell'. 4.

These Giants in the chains of 'Hell' are thus, in truth, the source of all activity in 'Heaven'. They are kept in chains by the priest or mine owner whose negative action springs from his weaknesses - his art is only to

1. M.H.H., plates 15-17, (K. p.155).
2. Heaven & Hell, p.491, no.564.
3. Ibid., p.480, no.553.
4. Ibid., p.492, no.566.

resist energy. The

'chains are the cunning of weak and tame minds which have power to resist energy'.

The tamed mind is one fed only on passive teachings and reared in an idle and easy environment. His moral fitness is thus based on an abstract education and passive up-bringing: This is what Locke and his followers taught and Blake briefly put in There is no Natural Religion:

'Man has no notion of moral fitness but from Education. Naturally he is only a natural organ subject to Sense.' 1.

In other words he becomes a passive repeater of what he has already been instructed or perceived by the five senses.

Once the mind is conditioned by this limited background it becomes passive and inflexible towards environments and outlooks different from its own. Any opposing viewpoint seems deformed and evil. Thus both the 'tame mind' and the passive reason are the same and have the similar aim of governing the unwilling or the priest who has become the victim of his own limited environment.

The passive character is not peaceful and non-violent. It is, on the contrary, usually weak in the courage needed to live an active and practical life but strong in the cunning and power needed to force his will on others:

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1. There Is No Natural Religion, 'The Argument.' (K. p.97).



'the weak in courage is strong in cunning'.

His will and strength are based on selfhood and assumed superiority and are thus, as we have seen before, pernicious to other people.

Through the 'tame mind' and 'systematic reasoning' the priest, like Urizen, drives a deep wedge between his selfhood or the devouring part and his productive or prolific part. As society is divided into 'Heaven' and 'Hell' so his mind is also divided:

'Thus one portion of being is the Prolific, the other the Devouring: to the Devourer it seems as if the producer was in his chains; but it is not so, he only takes portions of existence and fancies that the whole.' 1.

The devouring character is wrapped up in his natural memories like a 'Dragon' hidden in a Cave. He issues laws of restraint derived from the 'abyss of the five senses'. To the Devourer his likes and impressions formed by the five senses are all important. It seems to him that he has discovered the secrets of an unknown and hidden wisdom and that the creative portion or existence is in his chains. But he is mistaken. Like Urizen, he is 'Departing' and 'leaving ruinous fragments of life'.<sup>2.</sup> These fragments seem all-important but are merely 'portions of existence' which he imagines as the whole. For he

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1. M.H.H., plates 15-17, (K. p.155).  
 2. Ibid., plate 5, l.9, p.225.

'.....has closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern.' 1.

We can see this process clearly in Swedenborg. He imagines that he occupies a superior position in 'Heaven' above, while the infernal ones in 'Hell' who, from his viewpoint, live in torment, are under his restraint in chains. But from the Devil's viewpoint the people in 'Hell' neither live in torment nor are chained by the Angels. These 'chains' are merely the

'cunning of weak and tame minds which have power to resist energy'.

The 'weak and tame mind' first restrains itself and then attempts to restrain others. The devouring portion divides man from existence and from others becomes a passive negation of existence and society.

'But the Prolific would cease to be Prolific unless the Devourer, as a sea, recieved the excess of his delights.' 2.

The Devourer, in this context, is active and contrary to the prolific. Man becomes creative by developing and gratifying his desires rather than by restraining them. The devouring portion is created in man by rules of<sub>3</sub> restraint. For 'Every Harlot was a Virgin once'.

In other words, the Devourer can only turn into its contrary Prolific when desire or energy is fulfilled by action rather

1. Ibid., plate 14, p.154.
2. Ibid., plate 15-17, p.155.
3. The Gates of Paradise (K. p.771).



than by restraint. Desire or energy is like a sea; the barren lands become fertile when water washes over them.

'The desire of Man being Infinite, the possession is Infinite & himself Infinite.' 1.

Man acquires understanding by action and a practical life. He becomes free by this acted and gratified desire. The freed man or self is creative and prolific:

'The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom.' 2.

If the Devourer or desire is restrained it remains undeveloped and gradually becomes passive, but is not destroyed by the act of restraint:

'It indeed appear'd to Reason as if Desire was cast out, but the Devil's account is, that the Messiah fell, and formed a heaven of what he stole from the Abyss'. 3.

The fallen Messiah is called Satan. Satan turns against the people's desire and joy, or, in other words, the devourer instead of turning into its contrary, the Prolific, falls and remains as a passive Devourer.

The passive Devourer corresponds to passive Reason and the active Devourer or Desire corresponds to the active Reason. Reason is the 'bound or outward circumference of Energy' and therefore the quality of Reason depends on the development of 'Energy'. If 'Energy' is active, Reason becomes creative. This 'Reason' is, as Erdman says,

1. There Is No Natural Religion, VII, p.97.
2. 'Proverbs of Hell', Plate 7, (K. ed.150).
3. D.

'the horizon kept constantly on the move by man's infinite desire'. 1.

If 'Energy' is restrained, then Reason becomes passive and itself a restrainer. In society, the Priest is the personification or representative of such a passive restrainer and his religion, as we have seen before, is based on 'negation'.

'Negation' is unnecessary; but the existence of the contraries, the active Devourer or Desire, is essential for the creation of the contrary portion of the 'Prolific',

'Some will say: "Is not God alone the Prolific?"  
I answer: "God only Acts & Is, in existing beings or Men."' 2.

Here Blake gives a human form to the sky God of the priest.

In Blake's system there is no end to creation. The end of one creation is the beginning of another; the old heaven and earth pass away and new ones come into existence. In society, Blake represents this process by two classes or generations of people, one class or generation passing away and the other class rising up much as the old day is replaced by the new. Those who try to halt or fix this creation or regeneration destroy existence for:

'These two classes of men are always upon earth, & they should be enemies: whoever tries to reconcile them seeks to destroy existence.

Religion is an endeavour to reconcile the two.' 3.

The priest's attempts at 'reconciliation' are, as we have

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1. D. Erdman, op. cit., p.163.
  2. M.H.H., plates 15-17, p.155.
  3. Ibid.



seen before, based on laws of 'negation' with 'Heaven' as the punisher above and 'Hell' as the one suffering punishment below. The priest endeavours to reconcile 'Heaven' and 'Hell' by the established and rigid system. His 'reconciliation' is false and immoral because it is based on an unjust relationship, with one law for the idle in 'Heaven' and another for the active beings in 'Hell'.

With this 'reconciliation' based on cruel and irresponsible law as a background, Swedenborg discusses Peace and says that the Lord gives peace to the Angels in 'Heaven':

'that divine and heavenly peace is the peace which is meant in the word, may ... be manifest from .... passages where it is named, as Isaiah lii.7, Chap. liv.10, Chap.lix.8; Jerem. XVI.5, Chap. XXV.37 ... peace signifies the Lord and heaven, and likewise heavenly joy and the delight of good'. 1.

Blake apparently defends Jesus against any connection with Swedenborg's immoral 'Heaven', saying that

'Jesus Christ did not wish to unite'. 2.

the passive and idle priest with the active people. He did not side with the priest nor did he support his inhuman laws. As

'in the parable of sheep and goats ... He says: "I came not to send Peace, but a Sword".' 3.

The sheep here are the symbol of the passive while the goats represent the active and energetic characters. Jesus

1. H.H., p.217, no.287.
2. M.H.H., plates 15-17, (K. ed.155).
3. See also Matthew Ch.10, verse 34. Ibid.

indeed sided with the poor and active people and opposed the passive and idle priest-like class.

Blake's theory of the 'two classes of men' who must necessarily be enemies, might seem, as Middleton Murry has pointed out,<sup>1.</sup> a paradox in the context of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. The Marriage does indeed repudiate Swedenborg's divided society, yet Blake insists on the necessity of two contrary classes of men upon earth. Blake condemns Swedenborg's divided society because it is based on a static and fixed system. Blake condemns deformity not variety. The relationship between 'Heaven' and 'Hell' in Swedenborg is based on 'negation' which deforms and cripples one half of society. The selfish father cripples his children's creative energy. He stifles their growth and development and creates despair and hopelessness. In the Songs of Experience Blake censures the father-priest who binds his children to the earth and stifles their growth:

'Prison'd on wat'ry shore,  
Starry Jealousy does keep my den:  
Cold and hoar,  
Weeping o'er,  
I hear the Father of the ancient men.

Selfish father of men!  
Cruel, jealous, selfish fear!  
Can delight,  
Chain'd in night,  
The virgins of youth and morning bear?

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1. J. Middleton Murry, William Blake, (London 1933), pp. 80-1.



Does spring hide its joy  
 When buds and blossoms grow?  
 Does the sower  
 Sow by night,  
 Or the plowman in darkness plow?

Break this heavy chain  
 That does freeze my bones around.  
 Selfish! vain!  
 Eternal bane!  
 That free Love with bondage bound.' 1.

Blake's two classes of men are undeformed, and creative 'contraries'. Their relationship is based on love and unity. The child and father, for example, are contraries; one grows up, grows old and the other takes its place. The father is, by the process of natural growth, becoming passive like the setting sun, while the child is reaching the zenith of his 'active' life, like the rising sun. They are opposites and potential enemies because their interests are different and are in two different stages of development. But this opposition is necessary for creation and a necessary part of creation. It is part of the 'living being' both in the nature and in society: 'Opposition is true friendship' and 'The roaring of lions, the howling of wolves, the raging of the stormy sea, and the destructive sword, are portions of eternity, too great for the eye of man.' 3.

These are all manifestations of 'energies' in nature which cannot be imprisoned or resisted. When an energetic force encounters resistance in nature, it reacts violently. This

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1. Songs of Experience, (K. 210).
  2. M.H.H., plates 17-20, (K. 157).
  3. 'Proverbs of Hell', plate 8, (K. ed. p.151).

reaction can be the roaring of lions or the roll of thunder. Thunder is like the destructive sword which cuts through the stagnant and close air, while the wild beasts in Swedenborg's 'Hell' seem like the manifestations of restrained energy for

'some hells appear to the view like caves and dens, such as wild beasts inhabit in forests'. 1.

The jealous and selfish father negates the energy or life force of his children and thus creates the wild beasts in society. The priest's 'Heaven' and 'Hell' are ever divided by his self-interest which is being supported  
2. by his negative laws. The love which ought to unite man with his fellow creatures is with 'bondage bound' by  
3. such laws. Society becomes like a 'mill' with the priest as the 'miller' grinding the 'Heavenly' stones on the wretched in 'Hell'.

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1. For details see ~~Anna~~ Chapter Five on Law.
  2. H.H., p.509, no.585.
  3. See, for instance, There Is No Natural Religion, IV, (K. ed.97) and M.H.H. Plates 17-20, (K. ed.155).



8. 'One Law for the Lion and Ox is Oppression'

We have so far attempted to prove that The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is directly related to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and that it is written in opposition to the social order implied in Swedenborg's work. This opposition, as we have shown in the preceding chapter, was mainly based on social and economic grounds. When Blake attacks law, religion and abstract philosophy he does so because they are used to support the interest of the Angels or 'Lion' in 'Heaven' against the toilers or 'Ox' in 'Hell'. The Marriage closes with the aphorism: 'One law for the Lion and Ox is oppression'. This aphorism and 'the Song of Liberty' leave us in no doubt about Blake's social and political consciousness. The latter, as Geoffrey Keynes has pointed out, was 'probably intended to celebrate the advent of the French Republic'.<sup>1.</sup>

Before we discuss the worm symbol, we shall briefly show that Plates 17-20, 21-22, and 22-24 are also related to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell. Plates 17-20 are an effective satire of Swedenborg's idea of divine providence and system of 'Heaven' and 'Hell' which Blake associates with a 'Mill'.

'An Angel came to me and said: "O pitiable foolish young man! O horrible! O dreadful state! consider the hot burning dungeon thou art preparing for thyself to all eternity, to which thou art going in such career."

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1. The Notes, no. ~~148~~, (K. p.888).

'I said: "Perhaps you will be willing to shew me my eternal lot, & we will contemplate together upon it, and see whether your lot or mine is most desirable." ' 1.

Swedenborg the Angel upbraids the sinner doomed for hell, in the same tone of a righteous preacher that he used to condemn those in 'Hell' for their love of self and of the world. Blake asks the Angel to reveal his destiny to him so that they can judge which is the preferable 'fate'. Accordingly the Angel takes him:

'...thro' a stable & thro' a church & down into the church vault, at the end of which was a mill: thro' the mill we went, and came to a cave: down the winding cavern we groped our tedious way, till a void boundless as a nether sky appear'd beneath us, & we held by the roots of trees and hung over this immensity;....' 2.

The 'Stable' represents the passive and negative instructions about energy and experience which do not constructively teach:

'The tygers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction.' 3.

In Heaven and Hell Swedenborg discusses the three states 'of man after death, or of his spirit', the third of which

'is a state of instruction; this state appertains to those come into heaven, and become angels,....'

Those who are in 'Hell' have reached the infernal society

1. M.H.H., Plate 17-20, (K. p.155).
2. Ibid., (K. p.155).
3. 'Proverbs of Hell', Plate 9 (K. p.152).



because they

'cannot be instructed, wherefore their second state is likewise their third, .... they are altogether turned to their own love, thus to the infernal society which is in similar love'. 1.

Blake, though from 'Hell' is permitted to accompany the Angel through church or heaven. After passing through the stable or stage of instruction and church they finally come to a mill and cavern. The 'Mill' represents the rigid mechanical social order of 'Heaven' and 'Hell' while the 'cave', as we have seen before, represents static memories and instructions. The 'void boundless' which looms at the end of the 'winding cavern' and 'tedious way' represents the vacuum, which, as we have already noted, is Urizen's metaphysical world formed by passive natural impressions:

'A void immense, wild, dark & deep,  
Where nothing was: Nature's wide womb;  
And self balanc'd, stretch'd o'er the void.' 2.

Blake (the Devil) enters the immense world of the Angels where they 'held by the roots of trees and hung over this immensity.' The image suggests the metaphysical philosophy of Swedenborg who believed that all the joys and delights of the Angels 'comes from above'. 3. In other words, in Swedenborg's world the trees are upside down and their roots nourished from the void.

1. H.H., op.cit., pp.437-438, no.512.
2. The First Book of Urizen. Chap.II, plate 4, 1.16 (K. p.224).
3. H.H., op.cit., p.10, no.9.

The Devil, not content, wants to explore the void to see if Providence is there, but the Angel tells him not to 'presume' but instead to wait and see his 'lot' when the darkness passes away (when man leaves the body after death).

'So I remain'd with him, sitting in the twisted root of an oak; he was suspended in a fungus, which hung with the head downward into the deep.'

In this position they observe the 'Abyss' where societies of 'Heaven', 'spirits' and 'Hell' can be seen. In 'Hell' they behold:

'...the infinite Abyss, fiery as the smoke of a burning city; beneath us, at an immense distance, was the sun, black but shining; round it were fiery tracks on which revolv'd vast spiders, crawling after their prey, which flew, or rather swum, in the infinite deep, in the most terrific shapes of animals sprung from corruption; & the air was full of them, & seem'd composed of them: these are Devils, and are called Powers of the air. I now asked my companion which was my eternal lot? he said: "between the black & white spiders." ' 1.

This passage is a brief satirical reading of Swedenborg's 'Hell' and the society of spirits situated between 'Heaven' and 'Hell'. Of 'Hell', for example, there are many descriptive passages such as the following:

'....there is an exhalation thence either like that of fire with smoke, such as appears in the air from buildings on fire, or like flame without smoke, or like soot, such as comes from a chimney on fire, or like a mist and thick cloud:' 2.

In his chapter 'Concerning the Sun in Heaven' Swedenborg wrote:

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1. M.H.H., plates 17-20 (K. pp.155<sup>2</sup>).
  2. H.H., op.cit.: p.509, no.585.



'the sun of the world appears to the angels as somewhat of thick darkness opposite to the sun of heaven,.... because the fiery principle of the world corresponds to the love of self....' 1.

There are 'thick forests' in 'Hell':

'in which the infernal spirits wander like wild beasts, and where likewise there are subterraneous dens, into which they fly who are pursued by others.' 2.

Again:

'....they who turn themselves to the thick darkness which is in the place of the sun of the world, are in the hells to the back ....; darkness signifies the false principle grounded in evil, ....' 3.

In the world of spirits the wicked are naturally attracted to the 'sooty caverns' like

'ravens, wolves, and swine, which, in consequence of the smell which they perceive, fly and run to carrion and dunghills.' 4.

The caves lead

'obliquely downward to the deep, where....there are several doors: through those caverns exhale nauseous and foetid stenchs.' 5.

Those who work in the mines or 'Hell' are called 'Devil' or 'Satan' by Swedenborg. These 'Powers of the air' inhabit the regions that the Angel shows to Blake.

The Angel then says that Blake's destiny is to be

'between the black and white spiders' <sup>wh</sup>

which represent Swedenborg's idea of 'equilibrium':

1. Ibid., p.93, no.122. (our emphasis).
2. Ibid., p.510, no.586.
3. Ibid., p.94, no.123.
4. Ibid., pp.354-355, no. 429.
5. Ibid., p.354, no.429.

'.... spiritual equilibrium ... or freedom, exists and subsists between good acting on one part, and evil re-acting on the other part, or between evil acting on one part and good reacting on the other part; the equilibrium between good acting and evil re-acting is such as appertains to good ....' 1.

Blake uses the 'spider' as an ironical name for the 'spirit'. Satirizing Swedenborg's idea of equilibrium, he ironically places himself between the 'black & white spiders'. From between these worlds of good and evil or spiders 'a cloud and fire burst and rolled thro' the deep, black'ning all beneath,....'.

In his chapter on the 'World of Spirits' Swedenborg wrote:

'The world of spirits appears as a valley between mountains and rocks, here and there sinking and rising ....there appear dusky and ....sooty caverns,' 2.

After showing Blake (the representative of the Devils) his 'Hell', Swedenborg (the representative of the Angels) climbs up into the 'Mill' or 'Heaven'. Once the Devil is left alone, he finds that 'Hell' appears pleasant and harmonious. In other words the Devil is at ease with the others in 'Hell'.

'My friend the Angel climb'd up from his station into the mill: I remain'd alone; & then this appearance was no more, but I found myself sitting on a pleasant bank beside a river by moonlight, hearing a harper, who sung to the harp; & his theme was: "The man who never alters his opinion is like standing water, & breeds reptiles of the mind."

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1. Ibid., p.514, no.589.
  2. Ibid., p.354, no.429.



'But I arose and sought for the mill, & there I found my Angel, who surprised, asked me how I escaped?

'I answer'd: "All that we saw was owing to your metaphysics;....."' 1.

The ~~opinionated~~ Angel is fixed by his abstract and passive memories; caught in a static system, he grinds those in 'Hell' in his 'Mill':

'Shewing the Transgressors in Hell, the proud Warriors in Heaven, Heaven as a Punisher, & Hell as One under Punishment, With Laws from Plato & his Greeks....' 2.

The Devil now suggests that he show the Angel his 'eternal lot' in turn. The Angel laughs at this proposal but is caught 'by force' and taken above the earth into his heaven or metaphysical world. Blake and the Angel fly:

'westerly thro' the night, till we were elevated above the earth's shadow; then I flung myself with him directly into the body of the sun; here I clothed myself in white, & taking in my hand Swedenborg's volumes, sunk from the glorious clime,...' 3.

The Devil descends from Swedenborg's metaphysical world or the 'infinite Abyss' of passive memories and brings the 'skeleton of a body' which is wrapped in the linen clothes or passive and fixed memories of Swedenborg:

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1. M.H.H., op. cit. (K. p.156).
  2. Milton, Book the First, Plate 22, l.51 (K. p.506).
  3. M.H.H., Plate 17-20 (K. p.156).

'...I in my hand brought the skeleton of a body,  
which in the mill was Aristotle's Analytics.

'So the Angel said "thy phantasy has imposed upon me,  
& thou oughtest to be ashamed."

'I answer'd: "we impose on one another, & it is  
but lost time to converse with you whose works are  
only Analytics"'. 1.

The 'Analytics' suggests the idea of passive rationalism  
based on memories formed by the limited sense principle.

The plate ends with the theme of 'contraries':

'Opposition is True Friendship'

Plates 21-22 and 22-24 are a brief reading of Heaven and Hell  
and summarise what Blake has said in the previous plates.

Swedenborg reveals two dominating characteristics in  
Heaven and Hell. He interprets all his passive memories as  
qualities of wisdom and asserts that the Angels are the  
only wise beings. Secondly, he exhibits a distaste for  
the active life and work of the people in 'Hell', while  
believing that all necessities of life come from 'above'.  
He calls the objects of 'Hell' 'infernal' because they are  
based on love of self and of the world. Opposing Sweden-  
:borg's passive 'wisdom', Blake declared:

'I have always found that Angels have the vanity  
to speak of themselves as the only wise; this  
they do with a confident insolence sprouting from  
systematic reasoning'. 2.

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1. Ibid., (K. p.157).

2. M.H.H., plate 21-22, (K. p.157).



The following telling examples from Heaven and Hell will underline this statement.

'What is the quality of the wisdom of the angels of heaven, it is difficult to comprehend ....' 1.  
'But it can be concluded from this circumstance, that they are in the light of heaven....' 2.

The Angels live in 'celestial heat' which is essentially  
'divine love, from which they derive the ....  
desire of growing wise.' 3.

Furthermore, the Angels

'are gifted with delights .... according to the reception of wisdom from the Lord'. 4.

They are so wise that

'in one angelic expression there are things innumerable which cannot be expressed by the words of human language....' 5.

and they

'can impress such things on every word as elevate its meaning to interior wisdom'. 6.

The Angels'

'wisdom, in respect to human wisdom, is as a myriad to one', 7.

and thus Swedenborg realises how great it is

'and how great the ignorance of man respectively'. 8.

The Angels are continually 'perfecting'<sup>9.</sup> their wisdom,

1. H.H., p.193, no.265.
2. Ibid., p.193, no.266.
3. Ibid., p.194, no.266.
4. Ibid., p.195, no.266.
5. Ibid., p.198, no.269.
6. Ibid., p.198, no.269.
7. Ibid., p.199, no.269.
8. Ibid., p.200, no.269.
9. Ibid., p.205, no.278.

their 'discourse is ....full of <sup>1.</sup>wisdom', and their 'palaces  
and houses ....correspond to their <sup>2.</sup>wisdom and intelligence'.

The speech of the evil spirits which is full of  
'filthy ideas' are held in aversion by the Angels:

'the discourses in hell are thus opposite to the  
discourses in heaven, wherefore the wicked cannot  
endure angelic discourse, and the angels cannot  
endure infernal discourse:' <sup>3.</sup>

For 'in the same degree in which wisdom and intelligence  
prevail amongst the angels, wickedness and cunning  
prevail also amongst infernal spirits'. <sup>4.</sup>

These are just random examples of Swedenborg's atti-  
tude towards 'Heaven' and 'Hell'. Blake's opposition  
to the 'Angels' can be fully appreciated and justified in  
this context.

The rest of the plate continues the attack on  
Swedenborg who:

'...boasts that what he writes is new; tho' it is  
only the Contents or Index of already publish'd books.

'A man carried a monkey about for a shew, & because  
he was a little wiser than the monkey, grew vain,  
and conceiv'd himself as much wiser than seven men.  
It is so with Swedenborg: he shews the folly of  
churches, & exposes hypocrites, till he imagines  
that all are religious, & himself the single one  
on earth that ever broke a net.

'Now hear a plain fact: Swedenborg has not written  
one new truth. Now hear another: he has written  
all the old falsehoods.

1. Ibid., p.174, no.238.
2. Ibid., p.139, no.186.
3. Ibid., p.179, no.245.
4. Ibid., p.502, no.577.



'And now hear the reason. He conversed with Angels who are all religious, & conversed not with Devils who all hate religion, for he was incapable thro' his conceited notions.

'Thus Swedenborg's writings are a recapitulation of all superficial opinions, and an analysis of the more sublime - but no further.

'Have now another plain fact. Any man of mechanical talents may, from the writings of Paracelsus or Jacob Behmen, produce ten thousand volumes of equal value with Swedenborg's, and from those of Dante or Shakespear an infinite number.

'But when he has done this, let him not say that he knows better than his master, for he only holds a candle in sunshine.' 1.

The difference between the Angel Swedenborg and the Devil Blake is the same as that between selfhood and selflessness, the static and the creative being. The Angel has been trapped in his own net of selfhood or 'conceited notions'. Blake opposes this selfhood and criticises the system which has trapped the true man or 'Poetic Genius' in Swedenborg. Dogmatic religion and selfhood convey the same idea. The priest and the man with mechanical talents create falsehood by abstracting art from its sensible objects or social context.

In his chapter 'Concerning Divine Worship in Heaven', Swedenborg writes:

'All preachers are appointed by the Lord, and hence they have the gift of preaching,...priesthood signifies the good of love to the Lord, in which all in that Kingdom are principled...' 2.

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1. M.H.H. op. cit., pp.157-158.  
 2. H.H., p.165, no.226.

All preachers come from the Lord's spiritual Kingdom which is set against those in 'Hell' who live in fire  
 'kindled by the love of self and of the world....'<sup>1.</sup>

Blake defends the gifts of the Devil in 'Hell' against the passive Angel in 'Heaven' and insists on the virtue or honesty of the true Jesus against the Jehovah or false Jesus of the Priest. He writes in Plates 22-24:

'Once I saw a Devil in a flame of fire, who arose before an Angel that sat on a cloud, and the Devil utter'd these words: "The worship of God is: Honouring his gifts in other men, each according to his genius, and loving the greatest men best: those who envy or calumniate great men hate God; for there is no other God"' 2.

Swedenborg worshipped a Jesus who represented the 'laws of the ten commandments', but Blake honoured Jesus or the honest man who struggled to break these laws and free human beings from oppression.

Swedenborg decreed that 'Heaven' and 'Hell' must be ruled by the laws of Angels, but to Blake 'One law for the Lion & Ox is Oppression'. Law becomes oppressive when it fails its social and human responsibility and becomes a mere tool in the hands of the Angels to protect their self-interest against those in 'Hell'. When Blake attacks Swedenborg or similar figures he is in fact attacking the social system of law and order that they represent. He attacks Swedenborg for the same essential reasons that he attacked Locke and Newton.

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1. Ibid., p.165, no.224.  
 2. M.H.H., op.cit., p.158.



PART II

'WHAT IS MAN?'

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In Part II our purpose is two fold. Firstly to demonstrate that the worm in Blake's writing symbolises a social and human being who represents false mind, false art and fallen man against true mind, true art and true Man. There is conflict and strife between false man and true Man within society. We shall examine this dialectical process all through Blake's writings. Secondly we shall conclude that true Man and creative mind is eternal but falsehood is created. What is created can be annihilated <sup>n/</sup> too. For example 'contraries' are eternal but 'negation' is created. The 'worm' is a symbol of 'negation' and must be cut so that the 'contraries' can be redeemed: 'The cut worm forgives the plow'.

Since in this part we attempt to look at Man as a whole in Blake, therefore it is appropriate to call the title 'What is Man?' which is also a title for the preface to the designs of The Gates of Paradise which we shall discuss in detail while examining the 'worm' symbol.

1. The Worm Symbol in Tiriel and Book of Thel.

The word 'worm' is used to demonstrate two different types of social characters and mentality. One character, like Swedenborg, who feeds his own weak part and the other



who feeds others. One character is devourer and the other prolific. The word is sometimes used as the symbol of selfhood and at other times as the symbol of a weak being. In the book of Tiriel, for instance, it is used in the former sense and in the Book of Thel in the latter sense.

Tiriel is the symbol of fallen man and has three main characteristics: 'Hypocrisy, the idiot's wisdom & the wise man's folly.'<sup>1.</sup> He has escaped from the world of reality or experience and taken refuge in his passive infantile memories. He is, therefore, called an 'innocent old man' who only sees and pities himself. He curses and punishes his children through self-pity:

'Accursed race of Tiriel! behold your [aged del.] father;' 2.

He is jealous of his children and is afraid lest they take his power from him. He looks at them as his enemies and calls them 'worms of death':

'Serpents, not sons, wreathing around the bones of Tiriel!  
Ye worms of death, feasting upon your aged parent's flesh!' 3.

Although Tiriel calls his children 'worms of death' he is, however, himself a reptile and his inner being is a creeping form bound to the earth, that is, to his infantile or natural memories. He is

'a worm of sixty winters creeping on the dusky ground'. 4.

1. Tiriel, plate 8, 1.36, (K. p.110).
2. Ibid., plate 1, 1.7., (K. p.99).
3. Ibid., plate 1, 1.22.
4. Ibid., plate 8, 1.24, (K. p.110).

The creeping form represents the undeveloped character or selfhood.

The 'worm of sixty winters' represents the weak character who rejects the self-sacrificing aspects of life and flees back to his infantile memories. The doors of these pleasant memories are always open. Tiriel is blind and like frightened infants he feels his way and cries<sup>1.</sup> 'peace to these open doors!' He wanders in the pleasant gardens of 'Har' or in the shadow of infantile memories. But he cannot see the world of reality. He is 'blind to the pleasures of the sight and deaf to warbling birds.'

'All day they walk'd & all the night beneath the  
pleasant Moon,  
Westwardly journeying, till Tiriel grew weary with  
his travel.' 2.

The old man who enters through the door is an 'innocent old man' who looks weary from journeying. Tiriel passes through thick doors. He is

'....the king of rotten wood & of the bones of  
death;  
He wanders without eyes & passes thro' thick walls  
& doors.' 3.

Thel is a female version of Tiriel. She is the symbol of passive and abstract religion. Thel is the 'virgin of the skies' and 'queen of the vales' but without a use. The Book of Thel is an allegory of the passive character visiting the world of generation. Thel rejects the

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1. Ibid., plate 2, l.13 (K. p.101).
  2. Ibid., plate 4, l.30 (K. p.104).
  3. Ibid., plate 2, l.24 (K. p.101).



self-sacrificing aspects of experience and flees back to the valleys of 'Har' or her pleasant infantile memories which form her 'grave'. ('Grave' and 'cave' represent passive and fixed memories.) The symbols of the lily-of-the-valley, the cloud, the worm, and the clod of clay probably represent the close relationship and co-existence which exists among objects in nature and which ought to exist among human-beings too. The theme of the book seems to be the moral question:

'Can Wisdom be put in a silver rod?  
Or Love in a golden bowl?' 1.

The answers to these questions are apparently negative: neither 'Wisdom' nor 'Love' can be put in a 'silver rod' or 'golden bowl'. They should be seen through human action. A man's moral worth must be judged by his act of creation or the extent of his usefulness to others because: 'we live not for ourselves'. Tiriel is an ignorant 'innocent' who feeds only his own infantile memories or, in other words, his own weak part. Psychologically his inner being is like that of Thel. Both are bound to their passive memories and both are thus the same unborn spirit whose abode can be only the land of dreams and the grave of selfhood. The main characteristic of the unborn spirit is that it refuses the self-sacrificing aspects of life. It is in fact imprisoned in its own selfhood as a worm which is wrapped in a leaf and remains

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1. The Book of Thel, 'Thel's Motto', (K. ed.127).

always as a worm, feeding upon other beings without having any use.

The contrast between the 'worm' as a symbol of selfhood and the 'worm' as a symbol of a growing weak being can be seen in the Book of Thel. Thel represents the passive and selfish character who feeds only on her sweet infantile memories and the 'clod of clay' represents the selfless character who feeds the weak 'worm'. One represents abstract wisdom and other practical personality. Thel seeks only to please herself. She walks through the vales of 'Har' or infantile memories; she smells the flowers and hears the birds, but does not feed them:

"For I walk thro' the vales of Har, and smell the  
sweetest flowers,  
"But I feed not the little flowers; I hear the  
warbling birds,  
"But I feed not the warbling birds; they fly and  
seek their food:" 1.

Although Thel lives in pleasant surroundings she nevertheless complains and does not enjoy her life because she fears death:

"But Thel delights in these no more, because I  
fade away;  
"And all shall say, 'Without a use this shining  
woman liv'd,  
"Or did she only live to be at death the food  
of worms?" 2.

The poet, perhaps, shows the indecisive mental state of the unborn spirit or passive character. On the one hand she

1. Ibid., plate 3, l.18, (K. p.129).
2. Ibid., plate 3, l.21, (K. p.129).



is passive and bound to nature, while on the other hand she is conscious of her own death and the transient nature of delights. There are two alternatives: either the passive character has to sacrifice his selfhood and feed others by being creative or remain passive and 'smell the sweetest flowers' without feeding them. But he cannot do one or the other. Thel cannot delight in the sweet memories of the vales of 'Har' because they are mortal. In contrast to the creative mind in man the natural memories are weak and transitory. Thel laments the unreliable and transient nature of her life:

"O life of this our spring! why fades the lotus of  
the water,  
"Why fade these children of the spring, born but to  
smile & fall?  
"Ah! Thel is like a wat'ry bow, and like a parting  
cloud;  
"Like a reflection in a glass; like shadows in the  
water;  
"Like dreams of infants, like a smile upon an  
infant's face;  
"Like the dove's voice; like transient day; like  
music in the air." 1.

For travelling in this direction, as we have seen with Tiriell, leads to weariness. It leads to the night, and to the dark wood where the desolate spirit and lost traveller wanders. This path leads to 'standing lakes'<sup>2.</sup> and a static world. The journey is wearisome and Thel longs for the gentle 'sleep of death'.

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1. Ibid., plate 1, 1.6, (K. p.127).  
2. Tiriell, plate 5, 1.8 (K. p.106).

"Ah! gentle may I lay me down, and gentle rest my  
head,  
"And gentle sleep the sleep of death,...." 1.

This gentle sleep does not, however, bring her peace. She still hears the 'voice of sorrow breathed from the hollow pit'.<sup>2.</sup> This 'voice of sorrow' is the voice of the unborn spirit or undeveloped inner being and the 'hollow pit' is the womb of nature or impressions formed by sense perception.

Although aware of her transient life, Thel nevertheless refuses self-sacrifice. Tiriel calls his sons 'worms of death' and is frightened lest they take his power from him. Thel is similarly afraid of being the food of worms at death.

The poet finally shows the moral weakness of Thel by introducing the 'clod of clay' as a symbol of gentleness and selflessness. Thel feeds her own weak part but the 'clod of clay' feeds the helpless 'worm'. Thel abhors being eaten by the worms but the poet implies that it is better to be food for weak worms than a passive parasitic character feeding upon other beings.

"Then if thou art the food of worms, O virgin of the  
skies,  
"How great thy use, how great thy blessing! Every  
thing that lives  
"Lives not alone nor for itself." 3.

1. The Book of Thel, plate 1, l.12, (K. p.127).
2. Ibid., plate 6, l.10, p.130.
3. Ibid., plate 3, l.25, p.129.



Thel sees the worm who is helpless, naked and weeping but refuses to help:

"Art thou a Worm? Image of weakness, art thou but a Worm?

"I see thee like an infant wrapped in the Lilly's leaf.

"Ah! weep not, little voice, thou canst not speak, but thou canst weep.

"Is this a Worm? I see thee lay helpless & naked, weeping,

"And none to answer, none to cherish thee with mother's smiles."'. 1.

The wisdom of Thel, like that of Swedenborg, is put in a 'silver rod' and her 'love' in a 'golden bowl', and they are abstract. She is the virgin of the 'skies'; the skies represent abstraction. Though she describes the pitiful appearance of the worm and sees it helpless and naked like an infant, Thel's maternal instincts are not aroused; she does not attempt to nourish it. The 'clod of clay', on the contrary, hearing the worm's voice reacts with pity and offers her 'milky fondness':

'The Clod of Clay heard the Worm's voice & rais'd her pitying head:

She bow'd over the weeping infant, and her life ex-  
:hal'd

In milky fondness: then on Thel she fix'd her  
humble eyes.

"O beauty of the vales of Har! we live not for ourselves"'. 2.

Both the book of Tiriel and Thel are, apparently, based on social criticism of the time. Tiriel represents

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1. Ibid., plate 4, l.2, p.129.

2. Ibid., plate 4, l.8. (K. p.129).

the king and Thel the priest:

"O weak mistaken father of a lawless race,  
"Thy laws, O Har, & Tiriel's wisdom, end together  
in a curse." l.

The king rules his children by unjust and cruel laws while the priest teaches abstract love and wisdom. Thel is the symbol of the abstract character who is wise and knows the 'secrets of the land unknown'<sup>2</sup> yet escapes from reality. The 'clod' is the symbol of the active and practical character who, though she does not pretend to know the secrets of the 'land unknown' as Thel or the priest do, yet lives and loves. Thel separates wisdom and love from the practical life whereas the 'clod' combines love and life together: the 'clod' says:

"Thou seest me the meanest thing, and so I am indeed.  
"My bosom of itself is cold, and of itself is dark;  
  
"But he, that loves the lowly, pours his oil upon  
                                my head,  
"And kisses me, and binds his nuptial bands around  
                                my breast,  
"And says: 'Thou mother of my children, I have  
                                loved thee  
"'And I have given thee a crown that none can take  
                                away.'  
"But how this is, ....., I know not, and I cannot  
                                know;  
"I ponder, and I cannot ponder; yet I live and  
                                love." 3.

The 'clod' does not live according to rational knowledge which divides life into 'Good' and 'Evil' or 'Heaven' and 'Hell' as Swedenborg does. The knowledge of rationalism is based on limited sense perception or natural memories and the passive reasoner loves only those things

1. Tiriel: Plate 8, 1.7, (K. p.109).
2. The Book of Thel, (K. ed. plate 6, 1.2, 130).
3. Ibid., Plate 4, 1.12, (K. p.129).



which exist in his memory. But the 'clod' is united in heart and in mind, sees creation and society as a whole rather than in the terms of 'Heaven' and 'Hell'.

There is a gap between what Thel or the priest know and what they act. Thel, like the priest, knows that 'God would love a worm' and would punish 'The evil foot that wilful bruise'd its helpless form' but does not know that he 'cherish'd it with milk and oil'. In other words she has only an idea of punisher a God and like the priest, she repeats what has already been formed of God and love in her memories and, since these memories have been shaped by impressions received through sense perception instead of being perceived by active and practical experience, they are therefore bound to be limited and based on selfhood. These memories are like dead bones in a grave where the 'worm' of 'sixty winters' lives. This is the only place to which the passive reasoner can finally return:

'The eternal gates' terrific porter lifted the  
northern bar:  
Thel enter'd in & saw the secrets of the land  
unknown.  
She saw the couches of the dead, & where the  
fibrous roots  
Of every heart on earth infixes deep its restless  
twists:  
A land of sorrows & of tears where never smile  
was seen.' 1.

The limited natural memories are indeed the land of sorrows and tears because the 'eternal man' or the creative mind is chained to these passive and limited impressions.

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1. Ibid., plate 6, l.1, (K. p.130).

Memories formed by limited impressions can see only themselves and thus obstruct the creative mind or imagination. The passive memories are, thus, like a 'worm' embedded in the soil of the creative mind. The mind cannot be creative unless freed from these memories or selfhood.

2. The Worm Symbol in The Songs of Innocence and Experience

The word 'worm' is used both in the Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience. These works correspond to each other, 'Shewing the Two Contrary States of The Human Soul' in two different social relationships. The Songs of Innocence represents a selfless society where social relationship is based on love and brotherhood but in The Songs of Experience social relationship is rigid and based on selfhood and negation. The use made of the worm symbol in each book illustrates this contrast.

In The Songs of Experience the word 'worm' appears in 'The Sick Rose':

'O Rose, thou art sick!  
The invisible worm  
That flies in the night,  
In the howling storm,  
  
'Has found out thy bed  
Of crimson joy:  
And his dark secret love  
Does thy life destroy.' 1.

The 'worm' represents the negative teachings and selfish love of the priest who has divided the society into

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1. Songs of Experience, (K. ed. p.213).



'Heaven' and 'Hell' or he has divided man from men. With the negative teachings the priest feeds like a worm upon the love of the people and society. His words, worm-like, lie embedded and hidden in the minds of the people; and his words invisibly feed upon their joy and love and thus destroy them by creating negative feelings in them towards love and their fellow human beings or the world as a whole.

The priest's love is a selfish one which lives upon his children. He 'lays his curse on the fairest joys':<sup>1.</sup> He feeds on society and hides his selfish love under the veil of negation of people's joy and accusation of their weaknesses: He has 'found out thy bed of ~~common~~ <sup>crimson</sup> joy'. His abstract teachings are like a worm which has developed wings. It is invisible because it is based wholly on abstract words and instructions. The God that the priest worships is a mystery and his love of God is secret.<sup>2.</sup> His love is dark because it is selfish and its art lies merely in planting negative ideas among the people:

'And his dark secret love  
Does thy life destroy.'

He cannot create because he has indulged his ~~low~~ <sup>own</sup> ~~own~~

1. 'Proverbs of Hell', plate 9, (K. p.152).
2. Abstract ideas are called spectres by Blake, and Spectre with a capital letter is the Selfhood. This jealous Selfhood guards love, and breeds diseases or sickness.  
See Northrop Frye. op. cit., p.73.

selfhood, and, like a worm, feeds parasitically upon society.

This destructive and invisible worm or symbol of selfhood in The Songs of Experience corresponds to the 'glow-worm' in the Songs of Innocence. The 'glow-worm' represents selfless being or love who lights the ground in the dark nights for the beetle:

'I am set to light the ground,  
While the beetle goes his round:' 1.

We shall, however, discuss in detail the psychology of these two characters or personalities in The Gates of Paradise.

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1. Songs of Innocence, 'A Dream', (K. p.112).



3. The Gates of Paradise is one of the most important works that Blake engraved in 1793. It was his 'first attempt to convey his message primarily by a series of pictures.'<sup>1</sup> It illustrates two 'contrary states': one 'Innocence' or imagination, the other the fall of man from creation into division or natural memories. Blake has used the caterpillar as a human symbol for this purpose. He describes two parallel ways, one of which leads to the unity, expansion and freedom of man, and the other to the division, contraction and selfhood.

The designs illustrating this work were engraved in 1793 and issued with a title-page which is different from later editions of the work. The work was then called For children: The Gates of Paradise, and consisted only of the title-page and the seventeen emblems. The illustrations as they appeared in 1793 had already been engraved under that date (K. p.209). Many years afterwards Blake again used the plates, altering the title-page (he altered 'For children' to 'For the Sexes' and left 'The Gates of paradise' as before.) He added new sentences to the illustrations on several of the plates, and engraved three new plates with texts to come at the end. These three new plates, as the title indicates ('The Keys of the Gates'), are in fact the keys to these illustrations. In this form

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1. S. Foster Damon. A Blake Dictionary. The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake. (Brown University Press, 1965), p.149.

the work consists therefore, of 21 plates. The later work<sup>1.</sup> is assigned by Geoffrey Keynes to about the year 1818.

Another very interesting illustration which, it seems to me, must be studied together with The Gates of Paradise is The Dance of Albion or Glad Day dated 1780. But this date, as Keynes has suggested, seems to refer to the original drawing and not to the engraving, which was<sup>2.</sup> probably done about 1793. Nonetheless what is most important for us here is that Blake had apparently already arrived at the level of consciousness or imagination in 1780. By consciousness or imagination we mean, simply, the ability to see the 'Poetic Genius' or creative mind against passive and limited memories. In other words to acquire the vision of 'contraries' and 'negation'. In the illustration there is a youth who has stripped off his clothes and beneath him a butterfly hatching out of a chrysalis, leaving the skin behind; the sun rises behind the youth and under the original drawing (1780) the following sentences appear:

'Albion rose from where he labour'd at the Mill with  
Slaves;  
Giving himself for the Nations he danc'd the dance  
of Eternal Death.' 3.

In both the illustrations to The Gates of Paradise and Glad Day, it seems that the main purpose of the artist

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1. The Notes, g.760 (K. p.922).
  2. The Notes, g.160, (K. p.888).
  3. The Dance of Albion, (K. p.160).



is to show man's development from selfhood and limited sense perception to selflessness and freedom of creative mind or imagination. In order to show this, Blake uses the caterpillar worm as an example.

In Glad Day the poet, apparently, wants to show how the caterpillar which feeds on a leaf, has developed into a butterfly. The butterfly, rising up, leaves the skin or its garment behind. The butterfly is here neither a caterpillar nor the leaf upon which it lived before but the mixture and combination of both of them which has given birth to a new being, the butterfly. Similarly man frees himself by recreation of his natural memories in his mind. There is a difference between the caterpillar and man however, in that the development of the caterpillar to butterfly is finite and limited whereas there is no limitation for the creation of man. In other words, the creation and desires of man are infinite. For instance the creation of the caterpillar to the butterfly is one cycle of creation. But man's creation is infinite.

In the illustrations of the frontispiece to The Gates of Paradise we see a caterpillar on one leaf of the tree and a baby (human-being) wrapped in his swaddling clothes on the other leaf. Beneath the illustration is the question 'What is Man?'. Blake has answered the question on the same page as follows:

'The Sun's Light when he unfolds it  
Depends on the Organ that beholds it.'



*Albion rose from where he labourd at the Mill with Slaves  
Giving himself for the Nations he danc'd the dance of Death*

I. Albion rose from where he labourd at the Mill with Slaves,  
1780, engraved ca. 1796



FOR THE SEXES:  
THE GATES OF PARADISE.

*First engraved 1793*

*Additions made about 1818*

[FRONTISPIECE]



What is Man?

The Sun's Light when he unfolds it  
Depends on the Organ that beholds it.

## [PROLOGUE]

Mutual Forgiveness of each Vice,  
 Such are the Gates of Paradise.  
 Against the Accuser's chief desire,  
 Who walk'd among the Stones of Fire,  
 Jehovah's fingers Wrote the Law:  
 [Jehovah's Finger Wrote the Law: *later version*]  
 Then Wept! then rose in Zeal & Awe,  
 And in the midst of Sinai's heat  
 Hid it beneath his Mercy Seat.  
 [And the Dead Corpse from Sinai's heat  
 Buried beneath his Mercy Seat. *later version*]  
 O Christians, Christians! tell me Why  
 You rear it on your Altars high.



I

I found him beneath a Tree.



This means that an object is viewed differently by different eyes. In other words, as we have noted before, 'Everybody does not see alike'.

In The Gates of Paradise Blake represents the state of regeneration of the passive or fallen man. The Gates of Paradise is linked to Glad Day where the poet establishes a correspondence between the freedom of man from his limited natural memories or selfhood and the freedom of butterfly from its mother caterpillar which feeds on other beings. In Glad Day Albion, the freed man is giving himself for the nations because 'we live not for ourselves'<sup>1.</sup> But in The Gates of Paradise man, after hatching and breaking the shell of nature, flees back to the pleasant memories of his infancy just as Thel, refusing self-sacrifice, flees back to the 'vales of Har' that is to say, she escapes from life and reality.' Similarly, there is also a correspondence between the two beings on two separate leaves of the same tree. One develops as an organic part of the tree but the other is a divided organism and feeds on the leaf as an undeveloped parasite. The one which looks like a baby represents creation or selflessness, the other, which resembles a worm lying head downwards on the leaf (like the Angel hanging downwards from the root of a tree) represents <sup>the</sup> passive state or selfhood.

Swedenborg also uses animals and insects as symbols. He refers to the caterpillar as follows:

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1. The Book of Thel, plate 4, l.10, (K. p.129).

'How extraordinary is the case of caterpillars, which are the vilest things in the animal kingdom! They have the sagacity to nourish themselves with the juice extracted from leaves of the peculiar plants.....lay eggs and provide ...' 1.

As comment on this passage, Blake wrote the proverb:

'As the catterpillar chooses the fairest leaves to lay her eggs on, so the priest lays his curse on the fairest joys.' 2.

Thus Glad Day represents the freedom of creative man from limited natural impressions and For the Sexes: The Gates of Paradise represents the fall of man into nature or generation. (By the word 'nature' here, we mean passive, natural memories). The former represents the creative and active character, and the latter the passive character; one shows how creation ascends and the other how it descends. Creation descends because of man's weakness for 'creation is God descending according to the weakness of man'.<sup>3.</sup>

The passive memories are the weak part. Weakness is<sup>s</sup> created by the father or priest's passive teachings and selfhood. He sees the world only from his own limited viewpoint formed by memories of the impressions of his life, and attempts to mould the mind and personality of others in his own likeness:

'The child springs from the womb; the father ready stands to form  
'The infant head,.....' 4.

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1. H.H., p.79, no.107.
  2. M.H.H. plate 9, l.16 (K. p.152).
  3. Annotations to Lavater (K. p.87).
  4. Tiriel, plate 8, l.25 (K. p.110).



The infant's creative mind is twisted by the father or his thought is killed as 'The Fly' is killed by 'some blind hand'. The mind is twisted towards abstract teaching opposing active and creative life. Thus the mind remains undeveloped, and becomes passive or 'set in repose'.

The intellectual development of man is, at this stage, similar to the form of the chrysalis, which has not yet developed to the stage of butterfly or intellectual freedom. In other words, the chrysalis has either to develop to become the butterfly or to halt creation and fall. Similarly, the creative mind or imagination has either to create or become intellectually fixed and thus passive and fall back to his natural part.

By the word 'fall' we mean the descent from creation or imagination into passive natural memories or selfhood which is represented by the symbol of 'woman'. 'Woman' or 'Female' in Blake represents the social background and should not be taken as a literal reference. Natural memories are called 'Woman' because the first and deepest impressions of the world of everyone, whether male or female, are formed by and with the mother. Basic necessities, food and shelter, are thus associated with 'Woman' or mother. Thus 'Woman' or 'Female' comes to symbolise materialism or selfhood.

This is, perhaps, represented in Illustration No.1 where a woman is pulling the mandrake out of the ground: 'I found him beneath a tree'. What she finds, apparently,

is the infant form whose mind is put in repose while it was in its chrysalis stage of development. The chrysalis, in the illustration to the frontispiece, does not develop to a butterfly. The organ that sees it forms it in his own likeness. That is, the priest forms the mind of the infant.

When the chrysalis is kept undeveloped it falls from the Tree of Life down to the ground and takes root in the earth; that is to say, when the infant's mind and personality is kept undeveloped by negative teaching, then the creative mind descends and becomes like a weak worm bound to the earth. The earth, as a symbol of natural memories,<sup>1.</sup> corresponds to Urizen. Thus the limited natural memories rise and take over and govern the unwilling man when his creative mind or 'Eternal man' stops creating or is set in repose: the natural memories are also represented by the word 'Female':

'My Eternal Man set in Repose,  
The Female from his darkness rose  
And She found me beneath a Tree,  
A Mandrake, & in her Veil hid me.' 2.

In the processes of the creation of man there are two alternatives: he is either passive and weak as the result of his upbringing and social circumstances or active and creative. The passive or weak part does not rise unless the creative or 'Eternal Man' is 'set in repose'.

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1. The First Book of Urizen, plates 6-7, (K. p.226).
  2. The Gates of Paradise, (K. p.770).



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THE GATES OF PARADISE



2

Water  
Thou Waterest him with Tears:



3

Earth  
He struggles into Life

'Eternal Man', 'Poetic Genius' and Imagination all represent the same idea. When the creative or 'Eternal Man' is set into sleep the natural part or the 'worm' of weakness grows, as we have seen in Tiriell, and becomes a 'worm of sixty winters' or develops to 'Serpent Reasoning' of 'Good' and 'Evil', 'Virtue' and 'Vice' or 'Heaven' and 'Hell'. This fall of man into division and generation and his resurrection to unity is the theme of Vala or The Four Zoas (1795):

'His fall into Division & his Resurrection to  
Unity:  
His fall into the Generation of decay & death, &  
his  
Regeneration by the Resurrection from the dead.' 1.

The 'division' is division from imagination or Human existence and fall into generation or limited passive natural memories which is the state of death. Death represents the passive and fixed mind which like a dead body is wrapped in the 'Female veil' or natural memories. Vala or The Four Zoas, apparently, represents the 'Female veil'.<sup>2</sup> The veil also appears in the Visions of the Daughters of Albion. The abstract and negative teachings of the priest obstruct the innocent, honest, open and fearless joys of infancy. The child, who was seeking the vigorous joys of morning light,<sup>2</sup> has been frightened by the priest and hidden his joys in 'Leutha's veil'. 'Leutha's Veil' means 'Female Veil' which rises when the 'Eternal

1. The Four Zoas, Night the First, l.21, (K. p.264).
2. See, for instance, Visions of the Daughters of Albion, plate 6, l.4, (K. p.193).





4

Air  
On Cloudy Doubts & Reasoning Cares

Man' or the creative part is set in repose.

'I loved Theotormon,  
And I was not ashamed;  
I trembled in my virgin fears,  
And I hid in Leutha's vale!' 1.

All this means that when the creative mind is barred from development and creation and is instead governed by natural memories and abstract ideas then man becomes weak and earth-bound. The passive man turns his back on the world of reality and dreams and lives in the world of his limited memories. In the illustration No.2: 'Water', the passive thinker doubts his own energy and creative mind. He only believes his passive memories which, like pictures, are reflected in the water. In other words the passive character reflects his own memories formed by impressions of his own limited social environment. But these memories are like abstract pictures in the water because they do not exist except in the mind of a passive reasoner. He seeks his passive memories in the world of reality. Since he does not depend on his own creative energy he depends instead on beings and things other than his own creative power. He is bound to the earth. Sometimes he looks hopelessly at the stars in the immense space of his heaven (see illustration No.4) or, at another time, he rises against the world which, like fire, has surrounded him. (see illustration No. 5). But he is like Swedenborg who, while

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1. Ibid., p.189.



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5

Fire  
That end in endless Strife.

THE GATES OF PARADISE



6

At length for hatching ripe  
he breaks the shell.



in 'Heaven' is troubled by the infernal fire in 'Hell'. He is fighting for 'Truth' which to him exists only in his own memories. His 'Will' and 'rational truth' are like the 'flaming sword' (M.H.H. p.154, 'the cherub with his flaming sword') which represents the passive memories and fixed mentality which destroys the creative part in himself and then in other people. For the passive person first becomes himself the victim and then makes others victims by his laws of good and evil:

'Doubt Self Jealous, Wat'ry folly,  
Struggling thro' Earth's Melancholy,  
Naked in Air, in Shame & Fear,  
Blind in Fire with shield & spear,  
Two Horn'd Reasoning, Cloven Fiction,  
In Doubt, which is Self contradiction,  
A dark Hermaphrodite I (We ...) stood,  
Rational Truth, Root of Evil & Good.  
Round me flew the Flaming Sword;  
Round her snowy Whirlwinds roar'd  
Freezing her Veil, the Mundane Shell.' 1.

The 'Mundane Shell' is the passive upbringing and limited natural impressions which have surrounded and enclosed the 'Eternal' or the creative 'Man'. The 'Eternal Man' or Human existence is chained to earth by these memories. Thus he is not free. The creative mind and personality are hidden in the 'Female Veil' of natural memories. The creative mind or the real personality is wrapped up in the natural memories; it is as if it were hidden in a 'cave' or, like a dead body, put in the 'grave'.

The 'eternal man' or the creative mind or personality

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1. The Gates of Paradise, (K. p.770).

finally awakens and rends the 'Veil' and enters his 'Cave'. In other words the passive memories become active in the mind and the dead rise from the grave of the 'Mundane Shell'. After the resurrection or the awakening of the creative mind different people see in the 'Grave' different beings. One, like Blake, meets his Saviour or his Poetic Genius, who is the transformer of passive memories into active mental beings. Another, like Swedenborg (as Blake points out in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell) finds a 'Female Garment' there. Finally some find a 'Male', who is 'woven with care', that is to say, he is kept in restriction and bound by his limited natural memories and is therefore unable to rise. One frees the 'Eternal Man' or his creative personality, the other only the mental form of his memories formed by impressions since childhood. The 'Female' or the 'Sexual Garments' as we have seen in Swedenborg's heavenly memories, are limited and thus inferior to the creative mind or personality. Since the memories are fixed in the mind and are also limited to an individual environment and upbringing they are therefore based on selfhood or 'Sexual Garment'. These memories become a 'devouring Winding sheet'.

'I rent the Veil where the Dead dwell:  
When weary Man enters his Cave  
He meets his Saviour in the Grave  
Some find a Female Garment there  
And some a Male, woven with care,  
Lest the Sexual Garments sweet  
Should grow a devouring Winding sheet,'. 1.

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1. Ibid., pp.770-1.





<sup>7</sup>  
What are these? Alas! the Female Martyr,  
Is She also the Divine Image?

The man who meets his 'Eternal Man' as Saviour in the 'Grave' and rises, leaving all his linen clothes behind, is similar to the butterfly who flies away leaving the chrysalis behind. But the man who finds the garments or his natural memories in the 'Grave' is still, like the worm, bound to the earth or his natural part. Though the latter has risen from the 'Grave', he is still, like Swedenborg, (Marriage of Heaven and Hell, plate 3) 'sitting at the tomb'; in other words he is still bound to earth or his fixed natural memories. In this case the cycle of creation turns into the cycle of generation because it ends in the same position from which it had started. In other words it starts in infancy when man is weak like a worm on a leaf bound to its mother-nature, and it ends with the same weak character who is like an 'innocent old man' or a 'worm of sixty winters'. The same cycle of generation, as we have seen before, occurs in 'The Argument' of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. It starts with the Urizenic character of Rintrah and ends with the same character as in the illustration No. 8 the son rebels against his tyrannical father and then becomes himself the tyrant instead. In the same way, Swedenborg rebelled against priestcraft and the church and ended up himself a priest. All this means that taking the limited natural memories or selfhood instead of the 'Eternal Man' leads to the same dead end where the 'worm' is still 'weaving in the ground':



'The Door of Death I open found  
 And the Worm Weaving in the Ground:  
 Thou'rt my Mother from the Womb,  
 Wife, Sister, Daughter, to the Tomb,  
 Weaving to Dreams the Sexual strife  
 And weeping over the Web of Life'. 1.

The 'Eternal Man' is the martyr of the 'Female veil' or his limited memories. For the passive man limited memories are all important; they are his divine image and source of pleasure. He rejects the world of reality in favour of his memories, calling the former 'evil' and the latter 'good'. He flees from existence and life to non-existence or his passive memories (see the Illustration No. 7). Thus the world of reality is dead in the eyes of the passive beings; only their own limited and passive memories are living:

'One Dies! Alas! the Living & Dead,  
 One is slain & One is fled.' 2.

In the illustration No. 7 there are two children and the travelling man. The traveller seems astonished at the crime that has been committed. One child is slain and the other is fleeing towards the wood which represents the chaos of passive memories. The child slain on the ground represents the active and creative character and the child who is fleeing represents the passive character who flees back to his passive memories.

These two infants in the illustration perhaps also correspond to Tiriel and his brother Ijim in the book of

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1. Ibid., p.771.  
 2. Ibid.

Tiriel. Tiriel represents the passive and weary blind brother and Ijim the creative brother who is like a lion. Tiriel obstructs the 'lion's path' (see Tiriel, plate 4, lines 5-15, pp.103-4). Here Tiriel, though blind comprehends the power of his brother and is aware of his own weary life. He appeals to his brother not to smite him lest his children's curse fall upon him. In other words Ijim should not be a tyrant in his place. Otherwise his sons will treat him likewise:

"O brother Ijim, if it is thy voice that speaks  
to me,  
"Smite not thy brother Tiriel, tho' weary of his  
life.  
"My sons have smitten me already; and, if thou  
smitest me,  
"The curse that rolls over their heads will rest  
itself on thine." 1.

Tiriel has two children: 'Har' and 'Heva'. One child represents poetry and the other painting. 'Heva' represents the world of reality or the material world and 'Har' 2.  
represents the intellectual or mental form of the world.  
But in the passive man both painting and poetry are dead.  
'Har' and 'Heva' are like shadows:

'And Har & Heva, like two children, sat beneath  
the Oak:

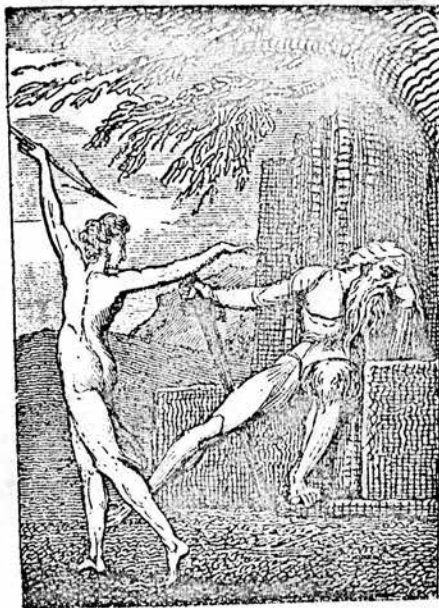
.....

'But they were as the shadow of Har & as the  
years forgotten.' 3.

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1. Tiriel, plate 4, l.11, (K. p.104).
  2. See, for instance, Erdman, op. cit., p.121.
  3. Tiriel, plate 2, l.5, (K. p.100).



THE GATES OF PARADISE



8 My Son! my Son!

The two children in the illustration also, apparently, echo the traditional story of Cain and Abel. Abel is slain by his brother Cain.

Beneath the illustration the traveller or the artist asks:

'What are these? Alas! the Female Martyr,  
Is She also the Divine Image?' 1.

The 'Female', as we have pointed out before, means the limited natural memories. For the priest, like Swedenborg, his limited memories are the divine image. They are his 'truth', 'affection', 'thought' and 'will'. The poet regrets that man has become the victim of his passive memories or 'Female veil'. The answer to the question 'Is She also the Divine Image?' accordingly must be negative. Since creation is God descending according to the weakness of man and the passive memories are the weak part of man, therefore man descends or falls by his limited and fixed memories.

The passive character seeks his liberty in a wrong direction, which is his endeavour to discover 'truth' in his own limited memories. He is blind to the world of reality.

'Blind to the pleasures of the sight & deaf to  
warbling birds:' 2.

The passive and blind character like Tiriél walks in darkness or night and avoids the sun. He walks beneath

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1. The Gates of Paradise, illustration No. 7.  
(K. p.765).
  2. Tiriél, plate 4, l.29, (K. p.104).



the 'moon'. The 'moon' represents 'female' or natural memories which are, in fact, the reflection of the reality or the sun. But this reality, like the sun of the preceding day, has passed and only memories of it have remained. The 'moon' at night can remind us of the sun but it is not the sun. For the passive character the 'moon' or his passive memories are warmth and light. Thus the passive character wants to move towards the west where there is always night.

'All day .... walk'd & all the night beneath the  
pleasant Moon,  
Westwardly journeying, till Tiriel grew weary  
with his travel.' 1.

The illustration No. 9. 'I Want! I Want!', shows the passive reasoner who wants freedom by means of his natural memories which are based on a limited sense perception.<sup>2.</sup> He wants to flee to the 'moon' because it is the only direction that he can go. He cannot face the world of reality. Whenever the passive character enters into the world of reality or 'Time's Ocean' he feels that he is drowning and calls 'Help! Help!' (see the illustration No. 10); similarly Swedenborg, whenever he is in the world of reality or among miners and their houses feels himself to be amid the perils of hell and fire. When he returns to his own social background then he feels himself in heaven. The passive character cannot see beyond his own

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1. Ibid., 1.30.

2. Erdman's suggestion that this particular illustration echoes James Gillray's satiric print of political pilgrim to the 'Promis'd Land' of 'Libertas', (See Erdman, pp.186-7) seems ~~interesting and perhaps~~ true; however, I interpret it among the rest of the illustrations.

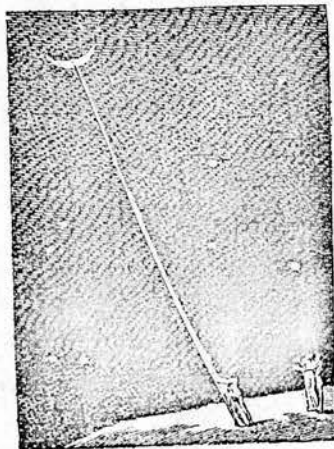
limited sense perception - and attempts to form the mind of others according to his limited perception. In the illustration No. 11. the 'Aged Ignorance' represents the fixed mind outlook which is formed only by this limited sense perception: 'Perceptive Organs closed, their Objects close'.<sup>1.</sup> When the mind stops creating then the 'Perceptive Organs' become closed, and man cannot see anything except the impressions which he has received through his five senses.

In the illustration there are an old man and a winged child. The old man represents the passive character and the winged child represents the winged life or creative character. The man faces towards the west and the child towards the rising sun in the east. The man restrains the child from moving towards the sun by clipping his wings. This action represents the negation of the creative mind by the passive reasoner who desires to rectify everything according to his own fixed outlook. The glasses that the aged man is wearing, perhaps represent this fixed outlook and he is apparently blind. When the creative mind becomes passive the eyes in fact become blind because they are unable to see except what they have already perceived.

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1. The Gates of Paradise, illustration no. 11.  
(K. p.767).





9 I want! I want!

'Holy & cold, I clip'd the Wings  
Of all Sublunary Things,' 1.

Such are the eyes of priest-like Swedenborg. His passive and limited memories being his 'truth' and he divides things into 'Good' and 'Evil' or 'Heaven' and 'Hell' according to his own viewpoint. He accuses the people in 'Hell' of love of self and of the world. In other words he teaches that people are in 'Hell' because they love themselves and the world, instead of the lord. Beneath the illustration No. 12. in which the father and his children are apparently starving, is seen the following question:

'Does thy God, O Priest, take such vengeance as  
this?' 2.

the  
The God of/priest takes vengeance since he is the God of the priest who has put the people in 'Hell' because they are not in love with his God. Both the priest and his God are in 'Heaven' and refuse self-sacrifice.

In No. 12. father and children are hopelessly starving and in No. 13. the children are sitting at their father's death bed fearfully watching his soul rising up to heaven, which is an ironical comment on the priest's promise of heaven in exchange for bodily sufferings.

1. Ibid., p.771.

2. Ibid., Illustration No. 12. (K. p.768).



THE GATES OF PARADISE



10

Help! Help!

In The Keys of the Gates the following statements or commentaries correspond to the illustrations No. 13 and No. 14:

'And in depths of my Dungeons  
Closed the Father & the Sons.  
But when once I did descry  
The Immortal Man that cannot Die,' 1.

All this means that the mind becomes passive when man halts creation, or the traveller falls asleep and is lost when he stops his travelling.

We come finally to the illustration No. 14. Beneath this illustration the following statement appears:

'The Traveller hasteth in the Evening'.

The word 'traveller' is the key word in this statement and indeed in the whole context of The Gates of Paradise.

It is the symbol of the active and creative personality as opposed to the passive personality or mind. Illustration No. 14. corresponds to illustration No. 15. In illustration No. 14. the 'traveller' hurries forwards but in No. 15. the old and weary traveller moves backward and enters through 'Death's Door', which, as we have mentioned before, means returning to his natural memories or 'Cave'. When 'Evening' arrives the creative and energetic man is loath to finish the labour of the day and looks forward to starting the next day after a night of rest. But the weary 'traveller' cannot see in front of his eyes. The 'Evening' apparently represents the final stage of daily work or the

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1. Ibid., (K. p.771).





II

Aged Ignorance  
Perceptive Organs closed, their Objects close.

tired moment of the traveller. When this occurs the creative character looks forward to carrying on his journey but the passive and blind character returns to home or to the stage from where he had started his journey. In other words the active character goes forward but the passive character turns or flees backwards. The active and creative personality depends on his own creative energy and mind but the passive personality depends on his limited natural impressions:

'Thro' evening shades I haste away  
To close the Labours of my Day.  
The Door of Death I open found  
And the Worm Weaving in the Ground:' 1.

The creative mind and passive mind are opposites. Man has either to create and progress or fall back into his natural memories or selfhood, which like a 'worm' exist in the social background of every individual. The only power which guides the poet in his journey is imagination or 'Eternal Man'. Creative imagination can distinguish the 'Door of Death' from the 'immortal Man' and the 'worm' from the 'plow' or labour:

'As the plow follows words, so God rewards prayers.  
The rat, the mouse, the fox, the rabbit watch  
The roots; the lion, the tyger, the horse, the  
elephant watch the fruits'.

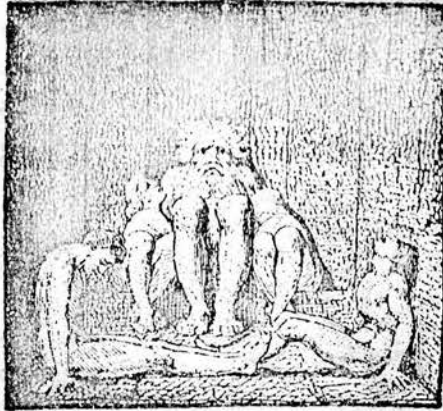
The passive personality cannot see the future and so he sees the past, the night instead of the dawn and sunrise, the root instead of the fruit of the tree. In other words instead of looking forward and depending on his

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1. Ibid., p.771.



THE GATES OF PARADISE.



12

Does thy God, O Priest, take such vengeance  
as this?



13

Fear & Hope are—Vision.





14

The Traveller hasteth in the Evening.



15

Death's Door



16

I have said to the Worm:  
Thou art my mother & my sister.

## THE KEYS

The Catterpillar on the Leaf  
Reminds thee of thy Mother's Grief.

## OF THE GATES

- 1 My Eternal Man set in Repose,  
The Female from his darkness rose  
And She found me beneath a Tree,  
A Mandrake, & in her Veil hid me.  
5 Serpent Reasonings us entice  
Of Good & Evil, Virtue & Vice.  
2 Doubt Self Jealous, Wat'ry folly,  
3 Struggling thro' Earth's Melancholy.  
4 Naked in Air, in Shame & Fear,  
10 Blind in Fire with shield & spear,  
Two Horn'd Reasoning, Cloven Fiction,  
In Doubt, which is Self contradiction,  
A dark Hermaphrodite I [*We later version*] stood,  
Rational Truth, Root of Evil & Good.  
15 Round me flew the Flaming Sword;  
Round her snowy Whirlwinds roar'd,  
Freezing her Veil, the Mundane Shell.  
6 I rent the Veil where the Dead dwell:



creative energy and mind he becomes passive by relying on his limited natural memories which are like a 'worm weaving in the ground'.

#### 4. The Psychology of Fallen Man

The Book of Urizen (1794): In the preceding parts we have attempted to show two contrary states of one being, the worm. One caterpillar, as we have noted in the illustration to the frontispiece, is a part of the tree which represents the tree of life and the other is divided from the tree of life while feeding on it. One has human form and the other insect form. We concluded that the caterpillar which is the part of the tree and has human form represents creative or true man and the other caterpillar which has divided itself from the tree while feeding on it represents natural man or fallen man. Thus on the tree of life or society we observe two beings or personalities. One being exists within the whole organism of Human existence or society and the other being has divided itself and living as a divided existence. 'Urizen' in Blake's writings represents the latter state of the being or <sup>the</sup> 'worm'.

In the Book of Urizen Blake illustrates the psychology of the Urizenic mentality. He explains how Urizen's mind is being formed by limited sense perception and is then divided from the rest of existence by creating an individual or solitary place for itself. The mind or personality is

divided or split into two parts: one is the passive mind or Urizen and the other is the 'Eternal Mind' or the prophetic and creative character who is bound and chained by the passive mind.

The mind or the personality of Urizen is the product of the impressions formed by his own limited social background. The term 'Urizen', as we have noted before, means 'your reason' because the world of Urizen, that is to say, his wisdom, laws, love, desire, truth, peace, compassion and pity are all the products and reflection of his own limited environment. All these impressions are fixed in his mind and what his reason can see is only the ratio of two things: one is the reflection of impressions from his own limited environment and the other is outside existence or society. His reason or mind is fixed between these two divided globes. He sees the world through his own limited and fixed impressions which are limited. In other words the passive mind which is formed by the limited impressions can see only the elements that it has already perceived for from a 'perception of only 3 senses or 3 elements none could deduce a fourth or fifth'.<sup>1.</sup>

Since the knowledge and discoveries of passive reason are based on the principle of sense perception and are thus limited to a certain background they are therefore unknown and abstract in the experience of other people. Thus Urizen's knowledge and discoveries are 'self-clos'd' and

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1. There Is No Natural Religion, (First Series)  
Principle III (K. p.97).



the passive reasoner has found them in 'eternity' which is an ironical name for the unknown and closed knowledge:

'Lo, a shadow of horror is risen  
In Eternity! Unknown, unprolific,  
Self-clos'd, all-repelling: what Demon  
Hath form'd this abominable void,  
This soul-shudd'ring vacuum? Some said  
"It is Urizen." But unknown, abstracted,  
Brooding, secret, the dark power hid.' 1.

Although sense perception is limited, and passive it has nevertheless a devouring nature. Urizen is an unprolific character who, like the caterpillar on the leaf, feeds on other beings. Passive sense perception draws in all kinds of things in silent activity and tormenting passions:

'Dark, revolving in silent activity:  
Unseen in tormenting passions:  
An activity unknown and horrible,  
A self-contemplating shadow,  
In enormous labours occupied.' 2.

All the impressions formed by the limited sense perception in Urizen do not have form and individuality. They are poured in and piled up in the dark and unknown spaces in the memory. The 'wood', as we have seen in Tiriel, 'forest', 'wilderness' and 'chaos' represent the passive memories. When Urizen like Tiriel is frightened he flees back to the woods. In other words he is like a frightened child who seeks refuge in the bosom of his natural memories. As the forests are dark, closed and unknown so are the passive memories. The traveller might

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1. The First Book of Urizen, Chap. I, para 1 (K. p.222).
  2. The First Book of Urizen, Chap. I, para. 4, (K.p.223).

easily lose his way in the dark forest and so he does in his passive memories because they are dark and chaotic too:

'But Eternals beheld his vast forests;  
Age on ages he lay, clos'd, unknown,  
Brooding shut in the deep; all avoid  
The petrific, abominable chaos.' 1.

The personality or mind of Urizen is sunk and hidden in this chaos which is filled with clouds, thunders, mountains, swelling seas hail and ice. Urizen's mind labours in darkness and he utters his laws from the depths of dark solitude. All these are rolling round the 'Eternal Man' or creative mind as a big wheel turns round a small wheel underneath:

'His cold horrors silent, dark Urizen  
Prepar'd; his ten thousands of thunders,  
Rang'd in gloom'd array, stretch out across  
The dread world; & the rolling of wheels,  
As of swelling seas, sound in his clouds,  
In his hills of stor'd snows, in his mountains  
Of hail & ice; voices of terror  
Are heard, like thunders of autumn.' 2.

The 'thunder' is peculiar to the Urizenic character of Rintrah. Urizen lives by terror and war. The priest and his established authority represent the passive and dark memories which existed through the ages as a secret knowledge passed on from one generation to another. They rolled through history like the 'rolling of wheels', the 'wheel' of passive memories, such as Swedenborg's 'Heaven', above and the creative minds in 'Hell' underneath. The priest by his assumed power turns the wheel of history over and over again like the 'rolling of wheels'. In Blake's

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1. Ibid.  
2. Ibid.



time the established religion and 'Heaven' were in the ascendant and the Urizenic mentality ruled society. Blake's 'wheels' and 'mill' are, as we have noted before, the symbols of the rigid social system in which the wheel of 'Heaven' rolls over 'Hell' where Albion 'labour'd at the mill with slaves'.<sup>1.</sup>

All this means that Urizen is created by the principle of sense-perception. His flexible senses or the creative mind are contracted by being fixed and conditioned to certain limited impressions formed by the sense perception. These impressions form the 'Earth', 'Heaven' and 'Immensity' of Urizen:

'Earth was not: nor globes of attraction;  
The will of the Immortal expanded  
Or contracted his all flexible senses;  
Death was not, but eternal life sprung.' 2.

The eternal life sprang from the fixed memories and the contraction of the flexible senses. What he could see were only his own fixed and internalized impressions against the creative mind. He could see only the immovable rocks rather than the moving sea. He discovers 'immensity' in his own abstract memories rather than in reality. In other words he looks backward rather than forward:

'The sound of a trumpet the heavens  
Awoke, & vast clouds of blood roll'd  
Round the dim rocks of Urizen, so nam'd  
That solitary one in Immensity.' 3.

1. For detail about 'wheel', 'mill' and industrial revolution see J. Bronowski, op.cit., pp.58-94.
2. Ibid., Chap. II, p.223.
3. Ibid.

Urizen like a 'worm' is wrapped in the 'womb' of nature or his natural memories. He is mentally asleep among his fixed memories. 'Urizen laid in a strong sleep.' His impressions formed by the sense perception enclose him inside as a 'womb' encloses a baby.

'And a roof vast, petrific around  
On all sides he fram'd, like a womb,' 1.

Inside, the womb is deep, dark and burning. It is 'nature's wide womb' which does not create. Instead it is an immense void which can only devour and consume existence and life. This weak and devouring character is the passive part in man which is against the creative and active personality or mind. Blake is conscious of this passive and weak mentality both in himself and society. When he says that

'First I fought with the fire, consum'd  
Inwards into a deep world within:' 2.

he is conscious of the passive and weak part in himself. Moreover, he satirizes and criticizes it both in himself as an individual and in Urizen as a social personality or mind. This self-criticism gives a wider outlook to the poet and a deep psychological insight. The Urizemic character has neither the insight to look into his own inner being nor the courage to criticize his own weaknesses. He is blind and imprisoned in nature's womb or in his selfhood,

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1. Ibid., Chap. III, para.7. (K. p.225).
  2. Ibid., Chap. II, para. 5. (K. p.224).



for one who is thus imprisoned cannot see anything except what is inside the womb or his limited natural memories.

Urizen has not developed beyond the level of sense perception which is a lower or animal level of existence. One of the major differences between animals and human beings, as we have noted before, is that animals are subject only to the principle of sense perception. But man has a creative or imaginative mind, that is to say, he can bring his thoughts back and put them alongside other thoughts at will, or he can put himself in the position of others and look at the world from their viewpoint. Above all man creates and recreates. But animals cannot do this. Urizen, from his subjection to fixed memories or established position, is associated with beast, bird, fish and serpent which represent natural being or limited mentality:

'...he strove in battles dire,  
In unseen confliotions with shapes  
Bred from his forsaken wilderness  
Of beast, bird, fish, serpent & element,' 1.

The beast lives in a cave, the bird in a nest, the fish in water and the serpent lives on the ground; Urizen lives in 'nature's wide womb' or his passive memories. Urizen, like a beast, only sees the inside of his cave or, like a fish, only what exists in the water. The fish can only live in water and likewise Urizen can only live in his natural memories.

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1. Ibid., Chap. I, para. 3, p.222.

The Urizenic character by returning to 'Nature's womb' or his natural memories divides himself from the rest of existence and instead creates his own 'immensity' within the womb. In this world of immensity he sees the sun and moon. He discovers the worlds in the endless abyss of his five senses. The eternal or creative man sees the rising sun in reality. Urizen sees the shadow or abstract reflection of the sun through the 'glasses' of his memories.

'Thus the Eternal Prophet was divided  
Before the death image of Urizen;  
For in changeable clouds and darkness,  
In a winterly night beneath,  
The Abyss of Los stretch'd immense;  
And now seen, now obscur'd, to the eyes  
Of Eternals the visions remote  
Of the dark separation appear'd:  
As glasses discover Worlds  
In the endless Abyss of space, ....' 1.

Glasses represent the principle of sense perception and, perhaps also, the Newtonian universe and social system.

Urizen, thus is divided and resembles a 'worm' on the leaf which is planted in the 'womb' of 'Enitharmon' or society. Enitharmon is sick of having the 'worm' in her 'womb' as the 'rose' in the 'Songs of Experience' is sick of the 'invisible worm'.<sup>2.</sup>

'A time passed over: the Eternals  
Began to erect the tent.  
When Enitharmon, sick,  
Felt a Worm within her womb.' 3.

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1. Ibid., Chap. V, Plate 15, (K. pp.230-1).
  2. The 'invisible worm', as we have seen before represents society and dark hypocrisy of Urizenic mentality.
  3. Ibid., The First Book of Urizen, Chap. VI, para. 3, p.232.



Urizen, like a helpless worm, is lying in the 'womb' of Enitharmon. It is growing to be a 'worm of sixty winters creeping on the dusky ground':

'Yet helpless it lay like a Worm  
In the trembling womb  
To be moulded into existence'. 1.

When the worm was moulded into existence it first appeared as Tiriel:

' ....Urizen sicken'd to see  
His eternal creations appear,  
Sons & daughters of sorrow on mountains  
Weeping, wailing. First Thiriel appear'd,' 2.

Tiriel's madness and deep dismay parallels that of King George's.<sup>3</sup> In the phrase 'first Tiriel appear'd' Blake perhaps refers to the mechanical rationalism of the age in which Tiriel appeared as the first manifestation or representative of passive rationalism and its weaknesses.

The 'diagnosis of Tiriel's bad upbringing and of his internal collapse through selfishness owes much to the moral psychology of Rousseau and Swedenborg'.<sup>4</sup>

The moral psychology of Swedenborg and Rousseau are weak because both encourage man to return to his natural or infantile memories. By this action they unconsciously try to bind the creative mind to natural impressions. In order to enable man to free himself Rousseau advocated returning to nature and Swedenborg denounced the world and

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., Chap. VIII, para. 3, (K. p.234).
3. See, for instance, Erdman, op. cit., p.121.
4. Ibid., p.121n, p.121.

advocated returning to the inner spiritual world which is formed by sense perception.

The worm in Urizen represents a character who owes much to the moral psychology of Swedenborg. The inner being or psychology of Urizen is like a worm. His upbringing is passive. 'I have sought for a joy without pain', says 'nature's wide womb' through Urizen. In other words the Urizenic character such as the priest seeks joy without hard work or pain. This Urizenic character or worm is lying in the 'womb' of Enitharmon.

The helpless worm in the 'womb' of Enitharmon is different from the helpless worm which is being nursed by the 'clod of clay'. The latter finally becomes useful 'for the Earthworm renews the moisture of the sandy plain'<sup>1</sup>. But the former grows and turns into a poisonous serpent or a harmful being. Its harm springs from its parasitical nature because it seeks joy without pain. Enitharmon is, therefore, sick and feels the worm within her womb.

'All day the worm lay on her bosom;  
All night within her womb  
The worm lay till it grew to a serpent,  
With dolorous hissings & poisons  
Round Enitharmon's loins folding.' 2.

The harmful worm or the inner being of Urizen is the result of his upbringing. Urizen's inner psychology is like a worm hidden in the womb of his limited social environment. The Urizenic character grows bodily but

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1. Vala or The Four Zoas, 1.368 (K. p.289).  
2. The First Book of Urizen (Chap. VI, para. 5 (K. p.232).



mentally remains like a worm or baby in its mother's bosom. In other words it outwardly resembles a man but mentally or psychologically is an immature child. This personality is represented by the 'man-child'. In appearance he is an adult but his inner being is an undeveloped sorrowful child who continuously seeks maternal attention. He is like a worm within Enitharmon's womb.

'Coil'd within Enitharmon's womb  
The serpent grew, casting its scales;  
With sharp pangs the hissings began  
To change to a grating cry:  
Many sorrows and dismal throes,  
Many forms of fish, bird & beast  
Brought forth an Infant form  
Where was a worm before.

'The Eternals their tent finished  
Alarm'd with these gloomy visions,  
When Enitharmon groaning  
Produc'd a man Child to the light.' 1.

The creative personality or mind in the 'man child' is crushed by being bound to natural impressions or being kept undeveloped. The personality of such a character is therefore a mere shadow of passive memories formed by impressions of a limited environment. Blake calls such a personality the 'Human shadow':

'A shriek ran thro' Eternity,  
And a paralytic stroke,  
At the birth of the Human shadow.' 2.

The 'Human shadow' represents garments or natural memories which, as we have seen before, are found in the 'grave'

1. Ibid., para. 6. (K. p. 232).
2. Ibid., para. 8. (K. p. 232).

by the passive reasoner. The 'Human shadow' and the 'Human abstract' of the Songs of Experience are thus the same thing. The 'Human shadow' is human in appearance but like a serpent inside, seemingly humane but poisonous and harmful in his social relationship. The 'sneaking serpent' who 'walks in mild humility', in 'The Argument', might also represent this sort of personality. The helpless worm, thus, turns into a serpent in Urizen but becomes a useful being in the bosom of the 'clod of clay'. Urizen corresponds to the 'clod of clay'.

In the symbol of a 'man Child' the 'Child' is the creative personality which is bound by the passive and jealous 'man'. When the child is born from Enitharmon or society he is taken and chained by Urizen. Everybody is born a child and is thus potentially creative but his social environment and upbringing can make him passive. In a society which is ruled by the Urizenic mentality the child's mind is formed according to that of Urizen.

'They took Orc to the top of a mountain.

.....  
They chain'd his young limbs to the rock  
With the Chain of Jealousy  
Beneath Urizen's deathful shadow.' 1.

'Orc' is the symbol of the creative personality or child. In the passive Urizenic character he is chained and imprisoned underneath his natural memories. In other words Urizen is the jealous father of 'Orc' or the child.

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1. Ibid., Chap. VII, para. 4 (K. p.233).



But in the creative or prophetic character 'Orc' or the child is freed. The child is the father of the passive personality or man. Wordsworth's idea that 'the child is father of the Man', perhaps corresponds to the freed 'Orc' or child. Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound' also, perhaps, corresponds to the symbol of the freed 'Orc' in Blake.

'Orc', like Rintrah, is a 'twofold being': one aspect is like the reprobate or the prophetic character and the other is the Urizenic character. If the 'child' is freed from the natural man, or, in other words, if the creative personality or mind is freed from the passive and limited memories, then 'Orc' becomes a creative or prophetic character. But, if the child is chained by the natural man, or the creative mind is imprisoned by the passive and limited memories, then 'Orc' becomes weak and a helpless subject of the passive personality or Urizen. This passive personality is represented by 'Urizen and Orc' who corresponds to the 'man Child':

'But Los encircled Enitharmon  
With fires of Prophecy  
From the sight of Urizen & Orc.' 1.

'Urizen and Orc' correspond to the false prophecy of 'Rintrah' in 'The Argument', which opens The Marriage. 'Rintrah', as we have seen before, is also the combination of two words 'reason' (peculiar to the creative mind,) and 'indra' (peculiar to Urizen). Urizen chains the 'child'

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1. Ibid., para. 9 (K. p.234).

or 'Orc' in a 'web' which is called 'The Net of Religion'.

'Till a Web, dark & cold, throughout all  
The tormented element stretch'd  
From the sorrows of Urizen's soul.

.....  
None could break the Web, no wings of fire,

'So twisted the cords, & so knotted  
The meshes, twisted like to the human brain.

'And all call'd it The Net of Religion.' 1.

All this means that Urizen is the symbol of selfhood and a  
'worm' in the bosom of society. Selfhood generates self-  
:hood. Urizen forms the mind and eyes of his children  
according to his own natural memories or selfhood:

'As the Eye is formed, such are its Powers'.<sup>2.</sup>

In other words as man is taught so he sees the world.  
The mind formed by closed natural memories teaches his  
children to turn towards the night instead of moving  
towards dawn and the sun-rise:

'Perceptive Organs closed, their Objects close.'

5. 'Enitharmon Slept Eighteen Hundred Years. Man Was  
a Dream!'

In the books of Europe (1794) and the Song of Los  
(1795), which includes Africa and Asia, the worm is the  
symbol of passive personality or the mind which is formed  
by sense-perception. Both Europe and the Song of Los  
illustrate the psychological condition of the fallen

1. Ibid., Chap. VIII, para. 7 (K. p.235).  
2. Letter to Dr. Trusler, 23 August, 1799. (K. p.793).



society, which is based on a mechanical system and unjust social relationships. The tone of the poet is satirical. Europe begins with mockery of the 'Cavern'd Man' as opposed to true Man or 'Poetic Genius':

"Five windows light the cavern'd Man: thro' one he  
breathes the air;  
"Thro' one hears music of the spheres; thro' one the  
eternal vine  
"Flourishes, that he may recieve the grapes; thro'  
one can look  
"And see small portions of the eternal world that  
ever groweth;  
"Thro' one himself pass out what time he please; but  
he will not,  
"For stolen joys are sweet & bread eaten in secret  
pleasant."  
"So sang a Fairy, mocking, as he sat .....  
upon the table and dictated EUROPE". 1.

The 'stolen joys' are the impressions formed by the sense principle in the mind of the passive person. These natural impressions are sweet because they are, as we have seen before, the source of everything that is important for the passive personality or 'Cavern'd Man'. They are his joy and food, but are 'stolen' because they are not based on his own energy. The 'bread .....pleasant' because it is 'eaten in secret' conveys the kind of life that the passive personality pursues. He lives in enjoyable secrecy. The 'dark secret love' in the Songs of Experience seems to convey the same idea.

The world of reality appears dead to the 'Cavern'd

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1. Europe, 1.1 (K. p.237).

Man'. His natural memories form his world, which seems to him the only living world.

".....tell me, what is the material world, and is it dead?"

asks the poet.

The Fairy who dictates Europe to the poet answers:

".....I will write a book on leaves of flowers,  
 "If you will feed me on love-thoughts & give me now  
 and then  
 "A cup of sparkling poetic fancies; so, when I am  
 tipsie,  
 "I'll sing to you to this soft lute, and shew you  
 all alive  
 "The world, where every particle of dust breathes  
 forth its joy." 1.

Here Blake satirises the shallowness of sense perception. The poet sees that 'every particle of dust breathes forth its joy'. The material world is not dead but depends on the organs which perceive it. The sun, for example, seemed dead to Swedenborg.

'It follows that the one Sun is living and that the other Sun is dead, also that the dead Sun itself was created by the living Sun from the Lord'.

Blake wrote beneath the passage: 'How could Life create death?' 2.

The passive personality, with eyes fixed on his limited impressions, can see nothing but his own static memories. The passive mind is like a tree whose roots are

1. Ibid., l. 14. (K. p.237).
2. Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love (K. p.92).



in the air instead of beneath the earth:

"My roots are brandish'd in the heavens, my fruits  
in earth beneath  
"Surge, foam and labour into life, first born &  
first consum'd!  
"Consumed and consuming!" 1.

'Consuming' conveys the devouring character of the passive personality. This was apparently the characteristic of the European monarchs of the time. The voice of Orc or the revolutionary character who has been corrupted by his passive memories is heard in Europe:

"Sitting in fathomless abyss of my immortal shrine  
"I sieze their burning power  
"And bring forth howling terrors, all devouring  
fiery kings,  
"Devouring & devoured, roaming on dark and desolate  
mountains,  
"In forests of eternal death, shrieking in hollow  
trees.  
"Ah mother Enitharmon!" 2.

Orc is like the sun which must either shine or sink and become dark, changing from a prolific to a devouring state. The 'forests of eternal death' suggest the passive natural memories. Orc flees back to the forest or his natural memories. He is a weary traveller, like Tiriël.

"For I am faint with travel" 3.

This fainting character of Orc is selfish and jealous, negating creation and binding the 'infinite with an eternal

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1. Europe, Plate 1, 1.8 (K. p.238).
  2. Ibid., Plate 2, 1.2. (K. p.238).
  3. Ibid., Plate 1, 1.6. (K. p.238).

hand'. He is jealous of his children and does not want them to take his place. He asks Mother Enitharmon:

"O mother Enitharmon, wilt thou bring forth  
other sons?

"To cause my name to vanish, that my place may not  
be found,....." 1.

The creative character of Orc was thus put in repose by the 'Shadowy Female' or his natural memories. He slept in the bosom of Mother Enitharmon like a worm in the womb of nature. Enitharmon, who represents society, lives in night because her creative son Orc is fallen. In other words, when the sun sets the night comes:

"Now comes the night of Enitharmon's joy!"

It is the night of society's joy. The ruling philosophy of the age is rational philosophy or 'Woman' who dominates society with her 'Female Will', or self-interest. The poet ironically asks:

"Who shall I call? Who shall I send,  
"That Woman, lovely Woman, may have dominion?" 2.

'Woman' is the symbol of passive memories or selfhood, and selfhood cannot remove selfhood. Therefore Rintrah, or the prophetic character, is called on to save Orc from the domination of 'Woman':

"Arise, O Rintrah, thee I call! & Palamabron, thee!

"Go! tell the Human race that Woman's love is Sin;

"That an Eternal life awaits the worms of sixty  
winters

"In an allegorical abode where existence hath never  
come.

"Forbid all Joy, & from her childhood shall the little

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1. Ibid., Plate 1, 1.4. (K. p.238).

2. Ibid., Plate 5, 1.2 (K. p.240).



female  
 "Spread nets in every secret path." 1.

The 'worms of sixty winters' convey the passive and Urizenic character similar to that of Tiriel. Here the rise of Rintrah, perhaps, refers to the revolutions of the seventeenth century of England, the first of which abolished the monarchy, and the second of which replaced one monarchy by the other.

"Alas! my Rintrah, bring the lovely jealous Ocalythron,"  
 The poet wrote, satirizing Rintrah.

"Arise, my son! bring all thy brethren, O thou king  
 of fire!

"Prince of the sun!

.....  
 "And thine eyes rejoice because of strength, O  
 Rintrah, furious king!" 2.

The 'lovely jealous Ocalythron' represents the jealous Queen, corresponding to the 'furious King'. One Urizenic character has been replaced by another Urizenic character. The creative character or Orc is put into a state of sleep and the 'night of Enitharmon's joy' still exists.

It is now the eighteenth century and Enitharmon or society is still sleeping:

'Enitharmon slept  
 Eighteen hundred years. Man was a Dream!  
 The night of Nature and their harps unstrung!  
 She slept in middle of her nightly song  
 Eighteen hundred years, a female dream'. 3.

Man dreamed in his natural memories age after age.

Enitharmon or society was divided into two 'stationary orbs'

1. Ibid., Plate 5, 1.4. (K. p.240).
2. Ibid., Plate 8, 1.8. (K. p.240).
3. Ibid., Plate 9, 1.1. (K. p.240).

or into 'Heaven' and 'Hell'. The revolutions did not help those in 'Hell' but served the interests of those in 'Heaven'. 'Heaven' was like a mighty wheel turning over the smaller wheel or 'Hell':

'..... man fled from its face and hid  
In forests of night: then all the eternal forests  
were divided  
Into earths rolling in circles of space, that like  
an ocean rush'd  
And overwhelmed all except this finite wall of  
flesh  
Then was the serpent temple form'd, image of infinite  
Shut up in finite revolutions, and man became an  
Angel,  
Heaven a mighty circle turning, God a tyrant  
crown'd'. 1.

The sleeping Enitharmon or mechanical system then becomes aware of the universal laws of Newton:

'A mighty Spirit leap'd from the land of Albion,  
Nam'd Newton: he siez'd the trump & blow'd the  
enormous blast!' 2.

Enitharmon is woken by the 'trump' of Albion. Newton's philosophy and laws are well suited to the mechanical system of society. They fit so comfortably into the existing system that Enitharmon is not even aware that she has been sleeping:

'Then Enitharmon woke, nor knew that she had slept;  
And eighteen hundred years were fled  
As if they had not been.' 3.

Despite all these changes the selfhood or the 'worms of sixty winters' still feed in the bosom of Enitharmon. The

1. Ibid., Plate 10, l.17. (K. p.241).
2. Ibid., Plate 13, l.4. (K. p.243).
3. Ibid., Plate 13, l.9. (K. p.243).



weak and needy 'Earth-worm' calls Enitharmon for help, but she does not pay attention to it. She instead invokes Ethinthus or her passive memories:

"Arise, Ethinthus! tho' the earth-worm call,  
"Let him call in vain, ....."' 1.

Ethinthus is the queen of waters, who shines in the sky. She, perhaps, corresponds to the 'starry floor,/ The wat'ry shore' which starts the Songs of Experience. The starry floor,/ The wat'ry shore, as we have mentioned before, represent the natural memories and their reflection in the mind of the passive reasoner. Enitharmon, ignoring the call of/<sup>the</sup>weak 'Earth-worm', comforts her 'fainting soul' by sweet Ethinthus:

"Ethinthus! thou art sweet as comforts to my  
fainting soul,  
"For now thy waters warble round the feet of  
Enitharmon." 2.

The selfish Urizenic characters and the condition of hopelessness have caused Enitharmon to become weak and faint.

The situation in France and Europe and the reign of terror after the French Revolution overshadowed the 'Island white'<sup>3.</sup> or Britain. It brought further repressive laws in England passed by a fearful and suspicious government:

'Every house a den, every man bound: the shadows are  
fill'd

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1. Ibid., plate 13, l.16. (K. p.243).
  2. Ibid., plate 14, l.4. (K. p.243).
  3. Ibid., plate 12, l.11. (K. p.242).

With spectres, and the windows wove over with  
 curses of iron:  
 Over the doors "Thou shalt not," & over the chimneys  
 "Fear" is written:' 1.

'Fear' existed within society and within Blake. In May 1792 The Royal Proclamation against Divers Wicked Seditious Writings foreshadowed the prosecution of radical publicists. 'Paine and his printer were prosecuted after the second part of The Rights of Man'.<sup>2.</sup> Blake was almost certainly compelled to cancel the publication of the remaining books of his poem - The French Revolution, a proof copy of which (the first book) was dated 1791. It was not because he had changed his mind about The French Revolution, but because a strong tide of counter-revolutionary feeling among the propertied class forced radicals to be more cautious, and either Blake or his printer, Joseph Johnson, may well have felt that his poem was too risky a venture.

When Blake etched Europe, the leaders of the London Corresponding Society were awaiting trial. 'The shadows of the censor and the spy lay across the page; and Blake knew it.'<sup>3.</sup> Therefore he had to use such symbols as the 'worm of sixty winters' or 'Tiriel' for George III and Rintrah for Pitt, and the 'earth-worm' to represent the wretched and needy people. The Royal Proclamation was not intended to protect the people from the terrors of The

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1. The Song of Los, lines 26-8, (K. p.243).
  2. For details see J. Bronowski, chap. on "The Seditious Writings", op.cit., pp.44-57.
  3. Ibid., p.52.



French Revolution but rather to safeguard the interests of the King. The 'earth-worm' still called for help, while the 'worm of sixty winters' lived in the bosom of 'Woman' or his selfhood.

In the Song of Los the poet satirically symbolises the coming of the abstract philosophy of the 'Five Senses' to Africa and Asia:

'Adam stood in the garden of Eden  
And Noah on the mountains of Ararat;  
They saw Urizen give his Laws to the Nations  
By the hands of the children of Los.' 1.

The 'children of Los' represent the false prophetic characters who are ruled by Urizen. They are sent to Africa and Asia to propound the abstract philosophy of 'Five Senses':

'Adam shudder'd! Noah faded! black grew the sunny  
African  
When Rintrah gave Abstract Philosophy to Brama in  
the East.' 2.

This 'Abstract Philosophy' is based on the passive natural memories. Urizen gives laws and religion according to his limited impressions formed by the principle of sense perception. This mechanical system manifests itself in the philosophy of Newton and Locke:

'Thus the terrible race of Los & Enitharmon gave  
Laws & Religions to the sons of Har, binding them more  
And more to Earth, closing and restraining,  
Till a Philosophy of Five Senses was complete.  
Urizen wept & gave it into the hands of Newton &  
Locke.' 3.

1. The Song of Los, 1.2. (K. p.245).
2. Ibid., 1.10.
3. Ibid., plate 4, 1.13 (K. p.246).

Blake criticizes Newton and Locke because their philosophy encourages passive memories which act against the creative and active mind or personality. The 'Abstract Philosophy' and the 'Philosophy of Five Senses' which govern laws and Religion are one and the same. The philosophy of the 'Five Senses' is abstract because it reduces the creative mind or personality to a limited and fixed viewpoint, binding him to 'Earth' or his passive part. The passive personality is a devouring character. He is selfish like Tiriel who pities himself and divides himself from his children and reduces them to poverty and wantonness. The Kings of Asia and Africa and the priest have built their heavens on the ruins of their people. In Asia the 'mortal worms' represent the passive characters who rule by the laws forced by their own natural memories or passive life: They

"...cut off the bread from the city,  
 "That the remnant may learn to obey,  
 "That the pride of the heart may fail,  
 "That the lust of the eyes may be quench'd,  
 "That the delicate ear in its infancy  
 "May be dull'd, and the nostrils clos'd up,  
 "To teach mortal worms the path  
 "That leads from the gates of the Grave?" 1.

The Urizenic character holds bread, the life line of people in his possession. And thus he can rule people according to his own wishes. He can reduce and destroy their individuality or personality and oblige them to obey his

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1. Ibid., plate 7, l.l. (K. p.247).



will. He destroys the creative personality or 'pride of the heart'. Once the creative personality is lost then man becomes like a mortal worm subject to something outside himself. The word 'mortal' represents the subjection or passive state of being.

The Urizenic character essentially attempts to destroy the impulsive and creative personality or mind in his children because they are a threat to his selfhood. He quenches the lust of the creative eyes by his 'negation' and restraint. The lust in the creative and innocent personality is different from that of the Urizenic character or that of the priest. The lust of the latter is like their 'will', pernicious to other people. But the lust or desire of the innocent or creative personality is prolific and does no harm in his relationship with others.

'The pride of the peacock is the glory of God.  
The lust of the goat is the bounty of God.  
The wrath of the lion is the wisdom of God.  
The nakedness of woman is the work of God.' 1.

But the 'pride', 'lust', 'wrath' and 'nakedness' 2.  
of the Urizenic character or the priest are not the work of God, but rather the work of Urizen.

Blake evaluates his characters according to their relationship with other beings or people. For this reason in one place a word is the symbol of a creative character and elsewhere is the symbol of passive and negative character. God or creative personality in one condition

1. M.H.H., (K. p.151).

2. See, for instance, H.H. op. cit., pp.132-3. no.179-80.

'is become a worm that he may nourish the weak.....' 1.  
 but in another condition he falls and becomes, like Tiriel,  
 a 'worm of sixty winters creeping on the dusky ground'<sup>2.</sup>  
 which is a devouring and destructive character. Blake  
 does not treat his characters as fixed and predestined  
 individuals. He treats them according to their position,  
 that is to say, whether they are prolific or devouring.  
 For

'let it be remember'd that creation is God  
 descending according to the weakness of man,....' 3.

The difference between the worm as God and the worm as  
 Tiriel is that the former feeds other weak beings but the  
 latter feeds his selfhood upon other beings.

In The Four Zoas and Jerusalem the word is used in  
 two different forms: one is, like Tiriel, the symbol  
 of the passive and negative character and the other the  
 symbol of humility and selflessness.

In The Four Zoas (1797) the poet illustrates, in a  
 long narrative, the fall of Man from creation into division  
 or passive natural memories and his resurrection from  
 division into unity or imagination:

'Vala or The Death and Judgement of the Ancient  
 Man a Dream of Nine Nights'.

The 'Ancient Man' is Albion or the creative personality  
 who, by turning his 'Eyes outward to Self', loses the 'Div-  
<sup>4.</sup>  
 :ine Vision'.

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1. Annotations To Lavater, (K. p.87).
  2. Tiriel, l.24 (K. p.110).
  3. Annotations To Lavater (K. p.87).
  4. See, for example, The Four Zoas, 'Night The Second',  
 l.1, (K. p.280).



In other words he sets natural memories against the Poetic Genius or imagination. The 'Divine Vision' or Imagination is the eternal and unchangeable power in man which creates and exercises its influence on the outside world or sensible objects which are changeable; whereas the fallen man subjects his mind to these limited and changeable objects. The word Enion, in The Four Zoas, generally represents this fallen man; Albion calls Urizen and asks him to take possession of the 'dark sleep of Death' or his passive memories:

"Behold these sick'ning Spheres,  
 "Whence is this voice of Enion that soundeth in my  
 [ears del.] Porches?  
 "Take thou possession! take this Scepter! go forth in  
 my might,  
 "For I am weary & must sleep in the dark sleep of  
 Death." 1.

The 'sleep of Death' is, as we have noted before, the division from reality and fall into generation or passive natural memories. Albion, by losing the 'Divine Vision', like the old man in the illustration of 'Death's Door', becomes weary and returns to his passive natural memories. When Albion returns to his natural memories his creative personality, like the child in the illustration, is slain. Like No. 7 of The Gates of Paradise, passive love or 'Luvah', smites the creative love: "Thy brother Luvah hath smitten me,...."<sup>2.</sup> After the creative personality or mind is

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1. Ibid., 11.3-4 (K. p.280).  
 2. Ibid., 1.7.

slain, Urizen and his 'Hosts' or natural memories rise. Urizen exults in his passive memories but his joys are based on sense perception on the 'Abyss' in which Enion or passive personality eagerly searches for prey like the 'hungry worm'.

'Urizen rose from the bright Feast like a star thro'  
the evening sky,  
Exulting at the voice that call'd him from the Feast  
of envy.  
First he beheld the body of Man, pale, cold; the  
horrors of death  
Beneath his feet shot thro' him as he stood in  
the Human Brain,  
And all its golden porches grew pale with his  
sickening light,  
No more Exulting, for he saw Eternal Death  
beneath.  
Pale, he beheld futurity: pale, he beheld the Abyss  
Where Enion, blind & age bent, wept in direful  
hunger craving,  
All rav'ning like the hungry worm & like the silent  
grave.' 1.

Inside the Abyss is 'Non Existence' or 'voidness' which draws 'Existence' inside the indefinite space. The indefinite space is full of passive natural memories which, like a shell, covers Albion or the creative mind:

2.

"Build we the Mundane Shell around the Rock of Albion".  
Albion or the creative personality can see only what is inside the 'Mundane Shell'. He is shut or has closed himself up, and applies his creative power to his limited natural memories. He sees, as we have seen in The Marriage

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1. Ibid., ll. 9-17.  
2. Ibid., 1.25.



of Heaven and Hell, all things 'thro' narrow chinks of his cavern'. Inside the cavern Urizen weaves his 'Atmospheres' where 'Spider' and 'Worm' work together:

'... all the time, in Caverns shut, the golden  
Looms erected  
First spun, then wove the Atmospheres; there the  
Spider & Worm  
Flied the wing'd shuttle, piping shrill thro' all  
the list'ning threads;' 1.

Spider and Worm correspond to the priest and King who collaborate together. One makes his 'Heaven' by laws of restraint and the other by 'Net of Religion'.

Urizen, by expanding his flexible senses, has built his own abstract world which is divided from the rest of existence. Enitharmon or society is suffering at the hands of this character. Los, the creative or prophetic son of Enitharmon, is mocked by the 'worm' or the passive personality:

"The poor forsaken Los, mock'd by the worm, the  
shelly snail," 2.

Here the 'worm' also suggests the natural memories which correspond to Vala. The Natural or fallen Man and Vala are the same idea. Vala, like the fallen Man or Urizen, becomes a 'worm' in the womb of Enitharmon:

"Vala shall become a Worm in Enitharmon's Womb," 3.

The 'worm' or the passive personality in the womb of Enitharmon or society is, like Tiriel, a harmful being,

1. Ibid., ll. 145-7 (K. p. 284).
2. Ibid., l. 307, ~~which~~ (K. p. 288).
3. Ibid., l. 20, ~~which~~ (K. p. 292).

feeding and living on other beings. One of the arts of Urizen is to reduce others to poverty by his 'Words of Wisdom' which teaches 'Moral Duty' or the laws of 'Good and Evil' while he himself fails to do his moral duty. Urizen reads in his book of brass in 'sounding' tones:

"Listen, ....to my voice. Listen to the Words of Wisdom,  
 "So shall you govern over all; let Moral Duty tune your tongue.  
 "But be your hearts harder than the nether millstone.  
 "To bring the Shadow of Enitharmon beneath our wondrous tree,  
 "That Los may Evaporate like smoke & be no more,  
 "Draw down Enitharmon to the Spectre of Urthona,  
 "And let him have dominion over Los,.....  
 "Compell the poor to live upon a Crust of bread, by soft mild arts.  
 "Smile when they frown, frown when they smile; & when a man looks pale  
 "With labour & abstinence, say he looks healthy & happy;  
 "And when his children sicken, let them die; there are enough  
 "Born, even too many, & our Earth will be overrun  
 "Without these arts .....  
 ".....If pale, say he is ruddy.  
 "Preach temperance: ..... " 1.

Blake satirizes the hypocrisy and selfish social relationship of his time. The 'millstone' represents the mechanical social system. Mother Enitharmon and her creative soul Los have been reduced to shadow or abstraction. The Spectre of Urthona personifies the false prophet or Urizenic character who, supposedly the shepherd or protector of Los or the creative personality, has instead dominated him and compelled him to live in poverty and an unhealthy condition.

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1. Ibid., 'Night the Seventh', ll.110-4(K.p.323).



Enitharmon or society has been thus divided and the 'worm' or Urizenic character restrains his children, compelling and binding others to his own natural memories or 'worm'. Seeing the hypocrisy of Urizen Orc answers in protest:

"Curse thy Cold hypocrisy! already round thy  
Tree  
"In scales that shine with gold & rubies, thou  
beginnest to weaken  
"My divided Spirit. Like a worm I rise in peace,  
unbound  
"From wrath. Now when I rage, my fetters bind me  
more.  
"O torment! O torment! A Worm compell'd! Am I a  
worm?  
"Is it in strong deceit that man is born? In strong  
deceit  
"Thou dost restrain my fury that the worm may fold  
the tree.  
"Avaunt, Cold hypocrite! I am chain'd, or thou  
couldst not use me thus.  
"The Man shall rage, bound with this chain, the  
worm in silence creep." 1.

To the question: 'Am I a worm?' or 'is Man a worm?' the answer is apparently positive. Man, as we have discussed before, is born into his natural memories. He is like the caterpillar on a leaf, but must free himself by setting his creative mind or imagination before natural memories as the butterfly grows from the caterpillar. All this means that in The Four Zoas the natural memories, or 'worm', cause the fall of man by binding or enfolding the creative mind:

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1. Ibid., ll.135-143.

"Man is a Worm; wearied with joy, he seeks the  
caves of sleep  
"Among the Flowers of Beulah, in his selfish  
cold repose  
"Forsaking Brotherhood & Universal love, in  
selfish clay  
"Folding the pure wings of his mind ....."' 1.

In Jerusalem, Blake also uses the word in this  
sense:

"Why wilt thou give to her a Body whose life is but  
a Shade?  
"Her joy and love, a shade, a shade of sweet repose:  
"But animated and vegetated she is a devouring  
worm." 2.

The words 'Woman', 'Female', 'Vala' convey the same idea.  
In Jerusalem, the passive natural memories as opposed to  
the creative mind are also criticized. The passive  
personality or mind is, as we have seen before, an  
unquenchable fire and never dying 'worm':

".....thou shalt be a Non Entity for ever;  
"And if any enter into thee, thou shalt be an  
Unquenchable Fire,  
"And he shall be a never dying Worm,....."' 3.

The 'Unquenchable Fire' is the fury and selfrighteousness  
of the natural man. The 'never dying Worm' represents  
the passive and fixed natural memories in the mind of the  
passive personality. According to some rationalists, like  
Swedenborg, the natural memories have divine origin. All  
memories of man from earliest infancy even to the conclusions

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1. Ibid., 'Night The Ninth', ll.627-30(K. p.374).
  2. Jerusalem, Chap.I, plate 12, ll.1-3(K. p.631).
  3. Ibid., plate 17, ll.44-6(K. p.639).



of life are

're-produced when it is well pleasing to the Lord'. 1.

The reproduction of the memories takes place by rational power and the divine acts through this rational power:

'Man hath Reason and Free will, or Rationality and Liberty; and that these two faculties are from the Lord in Man.' 2.

What the passive rationalist calls Divine is the 'Worm of seventy inches long' or his passive memories:

'I am your Rational Power, O Albion, & that Human Form  
"You call Divine is but a Worm seventy inches long  
"That creeps forth in a night ....."' 3.

The 'Worm of seventy inches long' conveys the personality whose knowledge of the divine is based on the impressions that he has formed by the sense principle in a limited environment. The 'Worm seventy inches long' and the 'worm of sixty winters' in Tiriel convey the same idea and are the symbol of negation. The worm of 'sixty winters' is also used in Jerusalem:

.....O mortal Man, O worm of sixty winters,'

The 'mortal Man' corresponds to 'Immortal Man':

'The Immortal Man that cannot Die.' 4.

The 'Immortal Man', as we have discussed in The Gates of Paradise, represents the active and creative personality

1. H.H., op. cit., p.379, no.461.
2. The Wisdom of Angels concerning the Divine Providence op. cit., p.90, no.71.
3. Jerusalem, Chap. 2, plate 33, ll.5-7(K. p.659).
4. The Gates of Paradise, l.40 (K. p.771).

as opposed to the passive personality or the 'mortal Man'. All this means that there are two kinds of characters. One is the passive character and the other the active and creative character. The passive character feeds only his own natural memories, the 'worm', but the creative character, on the contrary, feeds other weak and helpless beings. The passive memories are like a 'worm' in the creative mind or a parasitical being embedded in the ground of cultivation. The mind or society becomes creative when it is freed from the negation of passive beings or 'The cut worm forgives the plow.'

Blake lived amid negation and oppression and personally experienced these within society. Enitharmon, Los, Orc and Rintrah, for example, must be understood in this social context. Blake's use of these symbols does not spring from mere personal fancy: He had to convey his thoughts by some means or starve for his open opposition to false art or limited and natural memories. In other words, telling the truth was not without trouble. In his letter to Thomas Butts (10 January 1802) Blake writes:

'.....you have so generously & openly desired that I will divide my griefs with you, that I cannot hide what it is now become my duty to explain. - My unhappiness has arisen from a source which, if explor'd too narrowly, might hurt my pecuniary circumstances, As my dependence is on Engraving at present, & particularly on the Engravings I have in hand for Mr. H.: & I find on all hands great objections to my doing anything but the meer drudgery of business, & intimations that if I do not confine myself to this, I shall not live;..... I am not ashamed, afraid, or averse to tell you what Ought to be Told:



That I am under the direction of Messengers from Heaven, Daily & Nightly; but the nature of such things is not, as some suppose, without trouble or care. Temptations are on the right hand & left; behind, the sea of time & space roars & follows swiftly; he who keeps not right onward is lost, & if our footsteps slide in clay, how can we do otherwise than fear & tremble?' 1.

The conflict is between Poetic Genius and natural memories, or true and false art. Blake represents one and Hayley the other. Hayley possesses the worldly riches on which the artist depends and Blake has either to submit to his master's will by illustrating his limited pleasant memories, or follow his own direction and starve. It is difficult for Blake to keep to the right path without fear, not only of physical hardship but of losing his integrity and turning against Man, in a society where to defend the Bible, for example, was a perilous undertaking. As Blake writes in support of Thomas Paine against Bishop Watson:

'To defend the Bible in this year 1798 would cost a man his life.  
The Beast & the Whore rule without control.' 2.

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1. The Letters (to Thomas Butts, 10 January, 1802), (K. p.812-3).
  2. Annotations to Watson's 'Apology for The Bible' (1798) (K. p.383).

6. The Conclusion: 'Error is Created: Truth is Eternal'.

We have demonstrated that the terms 'Heaven' and 'Hell' are not abstract terms but that they represent two classes in society, that is, the leisure class and the poor. The relationship between 'Heaven' and 'Hell' is rigid and inhuman. It is suggested that Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell must be studied in the context of society.

We have shown that the 'Argument' and idea of 'contrary progression' in The Marriage are related to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and his idea of 'contrary state'. We have concluded that Swedenborg's idea of 'contrary state' and 'progression' is based on 'negation' and abstraction. It is negative because he sets up his passive memories against those who work and live in 'Hell'; and it is abstract because it is not based on practical and active life. The Marriage is written in ~~the~~ criticism of Swedenborg's static system. This criticism is based on philosophical and moral grounds. Firstly, Swedenborg believed that the good and plenty of 'Heaven' correspond to the inner state or 'driving love', 'will' and 'intellect' of Angels in 'Heaven'. In other words the delight and power of Angels are from above or the Lord rather than the world. Blake, contrary to Swedenborg believed that 'Heaven' and mental or intellectual state of man corresponds to his external and social circumstances and delight is from energy or the material world.



'As a man is, so he sees. As the Eye is formed,  
such are its Powers.'

Secondly, opposing Swedenborg's love, affection, and attraction to 'Heaven', Blake retorts that love, attraction, and reason are necessary for Human existence, but all these must be based on 'Energy' which is from the 'Body' or active life:

'Energy is the only life, and is from the Body;...'  
Swedenborg was philosophically a metaphysical thinker but morally a materialist. Blake, on the contrary, was philosophically a materialist, but morally a spiritual man. Swedenborg's 'contrary state' is based on negation or his passive memories, but Blake's 'contrary progression' is based on his active and creative work. He was an engraver, and lived by engraving, that is to say, he depended on his own energy.

It should be understood by what is said before when Blake attacks law, religion and abstract philosophy, he does so because they are used to support the interest of the Angels or <sup>the</sup> 'Lion' in 'Heaven' against the toilers or <sup>the</sup> 'Ox' in 'Hell'. 'Heaven' is 'as a Punisher, & Hell as One under Punishment.' Blake was one of those in 'Hell' and we see in him the 'just man' who is struggling to be free from the oppression of 'Heaven'. It was an easy matter for people like Swedenborg to support 'Heaven' but it was not so easy for Blake to support 'Hell'; when defending the Bible in 1798 'would cost a man his life.' It was a great honesty of Blake to defend the wretched in 'Hell'. We must be proud of him for his honesty and love of Man.

APPENDIX I

'Recent studies,' writes Erdman in the Preface to his scholarly book Blake Prophet against Empire, 'have related Blake's work to the Enlightenment and to the general context of the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution. But "General knowledge is Remote Knowledge," as Blake was wont to insist, and we miss much of the vitality if not the sublimity of his "Sublime Allegory.....addressed to the Intellectual Powers" as long as we remain only remotely acquainted with the "acts" of his age which he considered it his poetic duty "to record and eternize."<sup>1.</sup> While Erdman is right in this suggestion, he seems to fail to apply it to his study of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.

Erdman does indeed point out that The Marriage is based on satiric and doctrinal opposition to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, but he does not discuss the textual relationship<sup>2.</sup> and doctrinal opposition between these works. Instead he interprets The Marriage in the light of the French Revolution and counter-Revolution. For example he relates 'The Argument' to the counter-Revolution in France, but his suggestion seems unconvincing. 'The Argument' as we have attempted to illustrate in Chapter II, is related to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell, and Rintrah in 'The Argument' is the Urizenic character of Swedenborg.

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1. David V. Erdman, op.cit., p.vii.
  2. Ibid., see, for instance, pp.161-6.



My arguments against Erdman's interpretation of The Marriage are as follows:

Firstly he interprets 'The Argument,' the 'Proverbs of Hell', and indeed The Marriage as a whole, in the general context of the French Revolution; secondly he more or less dismisses the possibility of identifying Rintrah in 'The Argument; and thirdly, to support his interpretation of 'The Argument,' he suggests the addition of the word 'now' to the beginning of the fourth line of the first stanza in 'The Argument'.

The following proverbs from the 'Proverbs of Hell' commence Erdman's chapter on The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.

'Drive your cart and your plow over the bones of  
the dead.  
'The road of excess leads to the Palace of wisdom.  
Exuberance is beauty.'

These proverbs were, according to Erdman, written by Blake in support of the French Revolution. "In the French Revolution" writes Erdman, "we see what a deep and steady furrow Blake has determined to plow across the grave-yard of old ideas and old allegiances. In the Marriage of Heaven and Hell, a collection of manifestos and proverbs and 'Memorable Relations,' we see what a contrary and revolutionary step Blake has persuaded himself to take from an interest in the New Church to an enthusiasm<sup>1.</sup> for the New Society."

Since The Marriage is here being treated as general

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1. D.V. Erdman, op.cit., p.160.

doctrine of revolution, then the above-mentioned proverbs, perhaps, would not mean other than what Erdman suggests. It is indeed true that Blake supported the French Revolution and this is clearly expressed in his poem The French Revolution. The question whether the poet continued to support it after 1791 or not is out of the context of this study, although Jacob Bronowski has discussed the point in detail.<sup>1</sup> What we are concerned with at the moment is that The Marriage and the 'Proverbs of Hell,' as we have attempted to show in this thesis, are related to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and written in opposition to Swedenborg's rigid social system.

"The Argument," writes Erdman, "serves to adapt the .....confidence of the prose text of The Marriage to a time of war or rumours of war," We wonder how we can know this; Erdman suggests that the two following lines supply the 'Proper atmosphere' of war:

'Rintrah roars & shakes his fires in the burden'd air;  
Hungry clouds swag on the deep.' 2.

Erdman supports his contention that these lines supply a warlike atmosphere, by pointing out that Blake had used a similar image in his .....poem:

'The Heav'ns are shook with roaring war,  
And dust ascends the skies,' 3.

1. J. Bronowski, op. cit., p.47.
2. Erdman, op.cit., p.174.
3. Ibid., p.174.



Erdman argues that there are similar images in these lines. It is indeed true that the lines share the common words 'roar' and 'shake'. But we have shown (.....) that the key-words of these lines, 'fire', 'clouds', 'deep' and 'swag' are derived rather from Swedenborg's picture of 'Hell' or the coal-mines. The 'burden'd air' is almost certainly the air of 'Hell' or the coal-mines which the Angel Swedenborg repels and dislikes.

'The swagging (lowering) clouds,' remarks Erdman 'are doubtless war clouds hungry for blood. The roaring and the deep suggest the stormy roar and wintry seas of counter-revolution.' But in 'The Argument' it is Rintrah who 'roars and shakes his fires' not the 'stormy ..... seas of counter-revolution.' Is Rintrah then meant to represent 'the stormy roar and wintry seas of counter-revolution?' Rintrah has a definite role in 'The Argument' but Erdman states that he plays "no further part after this roaring in the Prologue and so must remain unidentified".<sup>1.</sup> Erdman's suggestion about images such as 'fire', 'cloud', and 'deep' and about the character of Rintrah seems implausible. We have shown that the former come rather from Swedenborg's 'Hell' or the coal-mines. The 'burden'd air' is the suffocating air of this 'Hell' or coal mines and Rintrah is the reasoning or Urizenic character of Swedenborg who repels and rejects the 'burden'd air' of

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1. Ibid.

the coal mines or 'Hell' in favour of the pleasant atmosphere of 'Heaven'.

The four stanzas which follow in 'The Argument' have also been interpreted in the light of Blake's French Revolution. 'In his French Revolution,' writes Erdman 'Blake had imagined the commons planting "beauty in the desert craving abyss" and had hoped that the priest would "no more in deadly black" compel the million "to howl in law blasted wastes!"<sup>1</sup> In the first prose page of The Marriage, Erdman further argues, 'Blake had announced 'the return of Adam into Paradise', and, in accordance with Erdman's theory this announcement heralded the return of the French peasant to freedom. The first part of 'The Argument' after the Rintrah lines begin, 'with a recapitulation of the hopeful first stage of the revolution when the meek peasant came out of the feudal shadow of death and was free to .... plant a fair harvest:

'Once meek and in a perilous path,  
The just man kept his course along  
The vale of death.  
[Now] Roses are planted where thorns grow,  
And on the barren heath  
Sing the honey bees'.

As opposition gave way to peace, "the perilous path<sup>2</sup> was planted".

This interpretation again seems incorrect. If Blake meant by 'the return of Adam into Paradise' the return of the French peasant into a state of freedom and peace, why did he position it with the prophecy or the Last Judgement

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1. Ibid., p.17<sup>4</sup>.

2. Ibid., pp.17<sup>4</sup>-5.



of Swedenborg? Furthermore there is difficulty over the word 'once.' If 'once' means the time after the peasant has 'come out of the feudal shadow of death', we must, as Erdman suggests, add the word 'now' to the beginning of the fourth line in the first stanza, but it seems wrong to do this both because it breaks the dialectical form of the poem and because surely if an addition to the text had been necessary, Blake would have added it.

APPENDIX II

Martin K. Nurmi agrees with Erdman's interpretation<sup>1.</sup> of Rintrah but his approach to The Marriage of Heaven and Hell as a whole differs from that of Erdman. Nurmi explains that the Marriage of Heaven and Hell is written in opposition to Swedenborg's doctrine of predestination but he nevertheless interprets Blake's idea of 'contraries' in<sup>2.</sup> the context of Boehme's doctrine.

Nurmi discusses the idea of 'contraries' in detail, and indeed his work Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell is, perhaps, the first detailed critical study of the work. Nurmi rightly argues that the Marriage does not teach diabolism. Blake "merely adopts the terms 'Heaven' and 'Hell' and uses them ironically to show that they are meaningless as the orthodox intend them."<sup>3.</sup> But as a whole his study, though rich in information, does not seem helpful in gaining an overall understanding of the Marriage of Heaven and Hell and particularly of the idea of 'contraries' in this work.

Nurmi attempts to elucidate the work and the idea of 'contraries' in the light of information that we have from Blake's later writings, more specifically from Milton and

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1. Martin K. Nurmi, op.cit., p.29.
  2. Ibid., pp.26-7.
  3. Ibid., p.25.



<sup>1.</sup>  
Jerusalem. It is true that Blake never altered his basic principles but he believed, as Nurmi himself has pointed out in his Preface, that every work must be studied and understood in its 'minute particulars'.<sup>2.</sup> In other words every work of art must be studied in its particular context. If we attempt to explain The Marriage of Heaven and Hell in the light of Blake's later works, we run the risk of reducing the force of the poets dynamism and creative imagination and of taking his whole work as a static doctrine. Blake's basic principles in The Marriage and Milton, for example, are the same yet the states or contexts of the two works are different. In the former he has experienced the false prophecy of Swedenborg and in the latter the exploitation and negation of William Hayley.<sup>3.</sup> In both works Blake discusses the idea of 'contraries' but they are certainly in different contexts.

Nurmi examines the idea of 'contraries' in the context of Boehme. "Attraction and repulsion as contraries in Blake," he writes, "possibly suggests a relatively recent spiritual crisis involving both Swedenborg and Boehme, a crisis in which intellectual affinity shifted from Swedenborg to Boehme."<sup>4.</sup>

There are in fact two hypotheses in Nurmi's suggestion:

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1. Ibid., see, for example, pp.11-14 and 15-23.
  2. Ibid., p.111.
  3. See, for example, G. Keynes. William Blake op.cit., pp.42-47.
  4. Nurmi. op.cit., p.28.

firstly that there was an affinity between Blake and Swedenborg, and secondly that the idea of 'contraries' in The Marriage represents the divergence of Blake from Swedenborg to Boehme. If, contrary to what Erdman suggests in his article Blake's Early Swedenborgianism: A Twentieth Century Legend with which Nurmi apparently agrees, we assume<sup>1.</sup> the first hypothesis is true; the second hypothesis is still seemingly unconvincing. The idea of 'contraries' in The Marriage is, as we have shown, directly related to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and written in opposition to Swedenborg's system.

Blake nowhere announced his intellectual shift from Swedenborg in favour of Boehme, nor does the latter have any special prominence in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. If the mere mention of Boehme's name in the Marriage of Heaven and Hell is to be considered evidence for Blake's taking up Boehme's doctrines, then one might as well attribute the assumed intellectual shift from Swedenborg to Shakespeare who is mentioned in The Marriage in the same passage with Boehme and Paracelsus and Dante.

There is an essential contradiction in Nurmi's argument. On the one hand he says that 'to look at The Marriage as in part a triumphant rejection of Swedenborg in favour of Boehme is helpful to an understanding of the

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1. Ibid., p.26.



spirit of its ideas.....' On the other hand he advises  
us not to take Blake as a Boehmeist.<sup>1.</sup>

Even if we were to accept such an assumption it is difficult to see how it would help our understanding of Blake. After quoting the key statement: "Without Contraries is no progression. Abstraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate." Nurmi says, "Not all of the paired terms of this first statement are equally relevant to Blake's essential doctrine of contraries. "Reason" and "Energy" are the key terms ..... But the other pairs can hardly be taken at face value or elevated to the status of metaphysical principals. "Love and Hate" do not constitute the basis of Blake's Cosmos.....In response to the gleam of satire in the author's eye, we may take "Love and Hate" as ironic designations of the pious mildness and the wrathful intransigence of the religious orthodox and the visionary unorthodox, respectively. Yet if we apply such an assumption to the other pair, "Attraction and Repulsion" the only ironic meaning that emerges seems too blurry to be Blake's. Here it is safer to suppose that we are confronted with an unassimilated pair of contraries derived from Jacob Boehme."<sup>2.</sup>

If Blake rejected Swedenborg in favour of Boehme, why would he derive an 'unassimilated pair of contraries' from him, which might disturb the unity of the work and

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1. Ibid., p.28.

2. Ibid., p.31.

create more difficulty in its understanding?

Nurmi adds in the following paragraph that: 'an

'an examination of Boehme's use of such contraries as attraction and repulsion will yield the conclusion that Blake's and Boehme's ideas about 'contraries' differ in important respects.' 1.

If Blake's 'contraries' differ in important respects from Boehme's then what other aspects made Blake reject Swedenborg in favour of him? M.K. Nurmi does not seem to explain this. It seems apparent that he has failed to realise the source of 'unassimilation' among the paired terms of 'contraries.' The 'unassimilation' among the paired terms of 'contraries' is due to the investigation of the remoter Boehme in order to understand The Marriage, rather than the possibility of inconsistency among the pairs of Blake's 'contraries.' If one looks at the paired terms of 'contraries' in relation to Swedenborg, there are no inconsistencies to be accounted for.

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1. Ibid., M.K. Nurmi, p.31.



APPENDIX III

In her large scholarly work Kathleen Raine discusses the relationship between Blake and Swedenborg in detail and attempts to identify Blake with Swedenborg. Blake "was not casting doubt on Swedenborg's prophecy of a New Age", writes Miss Raine, "but assuming both the prophecy and Swedenborg's authenticity as the Angel; .....In Milton Blake describes Swedenborg as the 'strongest of men, the Samson shorn by the Churches'. Conventional religious ideas were the bonds that curbed his natural genius. This we may suppose to be Blake's final judgment upon him."<sup>1.</sup>

It is true that 'conventional religious ideas' were the bonds that curbed Swedenborg's 'natural genius' and Blake indeed criticizes and rejects this false character in Swedenborg in favour of his 'natural genius' or true man. Blake similarly rejects Swedenborg's false prophecy which is based on his passive memories formed by these 'conventional religious ideas'. Blake opposed, as we have shown in the thesis, the Urizenic or punisher God of Swedenborg in 'Heaven'; supporting instead the people in 'Hell'. This seems to be Blake's criticism of Swedenborg's prophecy in The Marriage and also in Milton.

It is true that, as Miss Raine says, Blake describes Swedenborg as '.....strongest of men, the Samson shorn

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1. Kathleen Raine, Blake and Tradition. (London 1969) vol. 1. chap. 14, p.335.

by the Churches,.....' But she misses the point of the rest of the passage where Swedenborg's strong part has apparently given in to his weak and punishing character, who

"Shewing the Transgressors in Hell, the proud Warriors  
in Heaven,  
"Heaven as a Punisher, & Hell as One under Punishment,  
"With Laws from Plato & his Greeks to renew the  
Trojan Gods..." 1.

Trojan or Urizenic God (natural man) rises in Swedenborg over his true and loving God or spiritual man. Blake casts doubt on this passive and Urizenic prophecy of Swedenborg who is sitting like a proud 'Warrior' in 'Heaven' while the innocent suffer punishment in 'Hell'.

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1. Milton, Book The Second, plate 22, l.51, p.506.



APPENDIX IV

Kathleen Raine has related the idea of 'contraries' in The Marriage to Boehme. 'Blake derived', writes Miss Raine, 'such thought as: "Without Contraries is no progression," from passages like the following:

"God is also an Angry Zealous or Jealous God, and a consuming Fire; and in that source standeth the Abyss of Hell, the anger and malice of all the Devils, as also the poison of all creatures: and it is found that without poison and eagerness there is no Life; and from thence ariseth all contrariety and strife; and it is found that the strongest and most eager, is the most useful and profitable: for it maketh all things, and is the only cause of all mobility and life!" 1.

The term 'contrariety' does indeed appear in the passage and there is a conflict and strife between the Angry or Jealous God and the useful or profitable God; nevertheless this quotation does not seem enough on which to base Blake's statement:

'Without contraries is no progression.  
Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy,  
Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence.'

If this hypothesis arises from the use of the term 'contrariety' then there are numerous passages in all the works of Swedenborg which contain the word 'contrary' or 'contrariety.' Let us, for example, take his Arcana Caelestia where the words 'contrary' or 'contrariety' occur frequently:

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1. K. Raine, op.cit., p.363.

- They 'are with difficulty, brought to receive Truths which are contrary to their falses!' 1.
- 'The ends regarded are what alone cause either contrariety between the internal and external man.....' 2.
- 'Therefore in the word of those things are treated of which are contrary to the Divine (Principle)' 3.
- 'The evils and falsities with which goods and truths cannot be mixed, are such as are contrary to love to God and to love towards neighbour.' 4.
- 'If there is contrariety the exterior man altogether perverts or extinguishes what flows in through the interior!' 5.
- 'The cause of abomination is, that they are contrary to received principles and loves,.....' 6.
- 'By desolations and temptations also, states contrary to heavenly life are perceived,.....' 7.
- '.....those things which are of the light of heaven become darkness, when they fall into those things which are of the world's lumen, for in themselves they are contraries,.....' 8.
- 'There are .....spirits who infuse contrary persuasions, .....they speak things contrary to those which the instructor spirit from the angels said,.....' 9.
- 'every perception of a thing is according to reflection relative to discriminations arising from contraries in various modes and degrees.' 10.

These are just random examples taken from different volumes of Arcana. Beside the term 'contrariety' or 'contraries'

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1. Arcana Caelestia: Or Heavenly Mysteries, (London 1825, translated from the Original Latin, first published at London in 1749). Vol. 1, no.1366, p.123.
  2. Ibid., Vol.IV, no.3425, pp.349-50.
  3. Ibid., Vol.IV, no.3425, p.351.
  4. Ibid., Vol.V, no.3993, p.314.
  5. Ibid., Vol.VII, no.5427, p.367.
  6. Ibid., Vol.VIII, no.6052, p.161.
  7. Ibid., Vol.VIII, no.6144, p.211.
  8. Ibid., Vol.VIII, no.6309, p.288.
  9. Ibid., Vol.IX, no.7812, p.536.
  10. Ibid.



other key words, such as 'progression' also occur.

For example, Swedenborg writes:

'These Words signify Progression to things Divine,...' 1.

'....The Progression of the celestial thing of love..' 2.

'.....if this Progression be made from Scientific and rational truths.....' 3.

'Progression is from Scientific to things rational,...' 4.

'.....There are progressive motions (Progression) amongst the inhabitants in another life,...' 5.

'.....hereby is signified the Lord's progression in the goodness and truths of faith.....' 6.

'.....by which is signified a further and more interior progression,.....' 7.

'.....it was a continual progression of the human (Principle) to the Divine,.....' 8.

'It was shown me what is the manner of the progress of the delights arising from conjugal love, this way towards heaven, and that way towards hell:.....The progression was more interior.....' 9.

'.....in the present verse are signified those who are in progression,.....' 10.

'.....in respect to growing up, and increasing in age even to the last, this appertains to the state of progress; the state of progress succeeds from nativity.....' 11.

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1. Ibid., Vol. 2, no.1427, p.155.
  2. Ibid., Vol.2, no.1451, p.165.
  3. Ibid., Vol.2, no.1495, p.190.
  4. Ibid.
  5. Ibid., Vol.III, no.2196, p.60.
  6. Ibid., Vol.III, no.2500, p.235.
  7. Ibid.
  8. Ibid., Vol.III, no.2523, p.246.
  9. Ibid., Vol.III, no.2744, p.395.
  10. Ibid., Vol.IV, no.2950, p.37.
  11. Ibid., Vol.IV, no.3308, p.254.

'.....progression to further things, for progression and what is successive....' 1.

'.....by the journeys....of Abraham and Jacob were represented Progression into the truths of faith .....' 2.

'.....such progressions and derivations are perpetual with the man who is regenerated....' 3.

Although we can record similar random examples from other works of Swedenborg, nevertheless the statement 'without contraries....' is, as we have illustrated in the thesis, certainly related especially to Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell and written as opposition to his philosophy and mechanical system.

The passage from Boehme, if we take it as it stands, is quite opposite to Blake's idea of 'contraries', 'Angry Zealous' or 'Jealous God' and is, according to Blake, the symbol of 'negation' and tyranny. Negation is not contrary in the creative sense of the term. Negation is a fallen state of man or society. It is true that 'Angry Zealous' or 'Jealous God' is contrary to the useful and profitable God but every contrary being is not necessary for Life or Human existence. Blake when discussing the difference between 'negation' and 'contraries' in Milton wrote:

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1. Ibid., Vol.VI, no.4375, p.118.
  2. Ibid., Vol.VI, no.4430, p.152.
  3. Ibid., Vol.VII, no.5122, p.126.



"There is a Negation, & there is a Contrary:

"The Negation must be destroy'd to redeem the  
Contraries.

"The Negation is the Spectre, the Reasoning Power  
in Man:

"This is a false Body, an Incrustation over my  
Immortal

"Spirit, a Selfhood which must be put off & annihilated  
always.

"To cleanse the Face of my Spirit<sup>3</sup> by Self-examination,"  
1.

The 'Selfhood' or 'Reasoning Power' in The Gates of Paradise, as we have seen, is called 'Serpent Reasoning' which negates the 'Eternal Man' but its poisonous laws of 'Good and Evil':

'Serpent Reasonings us entice  
Of Good & Evil, Virtue & Vice.  
Doubt Self Jealous, Wat'ry folly,  
Struggling thro' Earth's Melancholy.' 2.

The 'Serpent Reasoning' is not contrary to creative or 'Eternal Man' but it is a 'negation' of it. Thus Boehme's statement that 'without poison and eagerness there is no Life' is utterly alien to Blake's thought. Swedenborg wrote in his Divine Love:

'It follows that the one Sun is living and that the other Sun is dead, also that the dead Sun itself was created by the living Sun from the Lord.'

Blake remarks: 'How could Life create death?' 3.

The 'contraries' in The Marriage are written in criticism of Swedenborg. Swedenborg, as we have illustrated in the thesis, perceives all those things and people that

1. Milton, Book The Second, plate 40, l.32 (K.p.533).
2. The Gates of Paradise (K. p.770).
3. Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love (K. p.92).

he loves as attributes of 'Heaven' and Angels, and all those things and people that he dislikes or hates as attributes of 'Hell' and the Devil. He, for example, regards passive life as 'Heavenly' and the active life as 'Hell'. Blake says that it is natural to love the good things of life and that this love must be based on one's own energy, or active life. Blake uses the terms 'Heaven' and 'Hell' merely to oppose Swedenborg by his own terms.

'From these contraries spring what the religious Call Good and Evil. Good is the passive that obeys Reason. Evil is the active Springing from Energy. Good is Heaven. Evil is Hell.'

This is a brief reading of Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell.

Closer examination of Blake's early writings might also show that the 'thought' of contraries in The Marriage was not derived from Boehme. Blake had acquired the knowledge through his own experience. In his Annotations to Swedenborg's Wisdom of Angels Concerning Divine Love and Divine Wisdom (1788) Blake seems to have formed his mind and the philosophy of 'contraries'. Swedenborg writes:

'Man is only a Recipient of Life. From this Cause it is, that Man, from his own hereditary Evil, reacts against God; but so far as he believes that all his Life is from God, and every Good of Life from the Action of God, and every Evil of Life from the Reaction of Man; Reaction thus becomes correspondent with Action, and Man acts with God as from himself.'

Blake wrote underneath:

'Good & Evil are here both Good & the two contraries Married'.

In other words 'Good' and 'Evil' are the product of



passive reasoning. Good is the passive force that obeys Reason (Action) and Evil is the active force springing from Energy (Reaction). The marriage between 'Good' and 'Evil' is, in fact, the marriage of the active and passive. In the same book Blake has shown the dialectical form of thought. Swedenborg writes:

'Moreover it was shown in the Light of Heaven,.... that the interior Compages of this little Brain was .... in the Order and Form of Heaven; and that its exterior Compages was in Opposition to that Order and Form.'

Blake, using Swedenborg's terms of 'Heaven' and 'Hell', sums up his dialectical thought very briefly as follows:

'Heaven & Hell are born together.' 1.

In other words 'exterior' and 'interior' or matter and spirit (object and subject) are born together, but the matter or (as Swedenborg put it) 'Hell' is prior to spirit or 'Heaven'. It is also the same mind in Blake that opposes and satirizes Swedenborg's static system of 'Heaven' and 'Hell' in the Marriage of Heaven and Hell.

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1. Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love. (K. p.96).

APPENDIX V

'Energy is the Only Life' is the title of Chapter 15 in Volume 1 of Kathleen Raine's Blake and Tradition.

'Miss Raine' writes John Wren-Lewis in his review of the work, 'devotes a whole chapter to Blake's 'Energy is Eternal Delight', but she somehow to me never conveys the feel of it, and I think the clue to this failure is to be found in Blake's recognition that 'Energy.....is of the Body.' Miss Raine's vision seems dominated by the fact that Blake draws again and again on mystical traditions whereby the body is seen as a tomb of the soul, a 'wreath of moist cloud', a 'fibrous polypus' in which man's divine imagination has somehow become ensnared. '<sup>1.</sup>

This is a brief reading of the chapter.

Kathleen Raine has attempted to interpret and relate the statement 'Energy is the only Life' in The Marriage to Boehme and Swedenborg. In this appendix our purpose is to show that Blake neither draws his idea that 'Energy is Eternal Delight' from the mysticism of Boehme nor that his thought is, contrary to Miss Raine's statement, 'within the structure of Swedenborgian thought.'<sup>2.</sup>

We shall, as we have demonstrated in the thesis, show first that Blake's thought is based on his own originality or practical experience rather than on a passive

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1. New Statesman, 22nd August 1969, p.250.
  2. Kathleen Raine, op.cit., p.368.



idea borrowed from Boehme or other sources, and secondly that Blake's thought not only was not within the structure of Swedenborgian thought but rather written against Swedenborg's philosophy and moral values.

Kathleen Raine argues that Blake's philosophy of energy was not his own acquired knowledge or 'invention'.

'This philosophy of energy as 'the only life' that is 'from the Body', writes Miss Raine, was certainly no invention of Blake's. Boehme's Father and his seven nature-spirits is nothing less than the energy of nature and of the body:

'For here you must understand, that there are two Wills in one Being, and they cause two Principles: One is love and the other is the Anger or the Source of Wrath. The first Will is not called God, but Nature; the second Will is called A and O, the beginning and the End, from Eternity to Eternity: and in the first Will, Nature could not be manifest, the second Will, makes Nature manifest. ....and the one would be nothing without the other.' 1.

We do not see how Blake could have possibly derived his philosophy of 'Energy' from the above mentioned passage or similar passages. Boehme's passage does relate indeed to the contrary nature of man, but does not refer to Energy, and, moreover, Blake, long before writing The Marriage, had formed a clear vision of the contrary capacity of man.

For example, in his Annotations to Lavater's Aphorisms on Man (1788) Blake writes:

'Man is a twofold being, one part capable of evil & the other capable of good; that which is capable of good is not also capable of evil, but that which is capable of evil is also capable of good....' 2.

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1. Ibid., p.364.

2. Annotations to Lavater (K. p.80).

Again:

'.....man is either the ark of God or a phantom of the earth & of the water;.....' 1.

But Blake would not agree with Boehme's idea that 'there are two Wills in one Being.' According to Blake when man is being in one Will or driving love he cannot be in other at the same time. In other words man can be either inactive or good and passive or evil.

'....both evil & good cannot exist in a simple being, for thus 2 contraries would spring from one essence, which is impossible;....' 2.

Blake furthermore suspected 'Will' as 'Evil'. In his Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love he wrote:

'There can be no Good Will. Will is always Evil; it is pernicious to others or suffering.' 3.

Even if we accept one 'Will' of Boehme's as meaning 'Love' and the other as meaning 'Wrath', then we are still dealing with passive 'Love' and 'Hate' or 'Heaven' and 'Hell' similar to that of Swedenborg. For:

'Understanding or Heaven....Man; it is acquir'd by means of Suffering & Distress & Experience, Will, Desire, Love, Pain, Envy, & .....are Natural, but Understanding is Acquir'd.....' 4.

And the acquired 'Understanding' says that 'Without Contraries there is no progression' in other words man by

1. Ibid., (K. p.82).

2. Ibid., p.80.

3. Annotations to Swedenborg's Divine Love, (K. p.89),

4. Ibid.



this genius or reason distinguishes good things from bad things, but this recognition of reason and its 'love' and 'attraction' to the good things in life and 'hate' and 'repulsion' against undesirable and bad of life must be based on one's own 'Energy'. If 'Will' or 'Love' is not based on active life or 'Energy' then it is passive and thus 'Evil.' Blake's idea of 'Energy' is not delineation of passive states of love or wrath but rather of the active and creative personality or man. In his Annotations to Lavater Blake gives some idea of what he meant by 'Energy'. Lavater wrote:

'He alone is good, who, though possessed of energy, prefers virtue, with the appearance of weakness, to the invitation of acting brilliantly ill.'

Blake wrote underneath:

'Noble! But Mark! Active Evil is better than Passive Good.'. 1.

Energy, as we have illustrated in detail, is the true man and also the active personality of Blake as opposed to all abstractions and passive memories.

Even if we assume that Boehme held an idea of 'Energy' similar to that of Blake there is still a sharp contradiction in Miss Raine's argument that the 'philosophy of energy...was certainly no invention of Blake's'. The contradiction lies between Blake's experimental method of

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1. Annotations to Lavater (K. p.77).

knowledge and Miss Raine's derivative method.

The true method of Knowledge, according to Blake, is the Knowledge which is experienced practically by man himself. Blake in All Religions are One (1788) has clearly and precisely defined his philosophy of Knowledge:

'The Argument. As the true method of knowledge is experiment, the true faculty of knowing must be the faculty which experiences. This faculty I treat of.'

This method of knowledge is opposed to memory or passive knowledge which Blake puts as follows:

'The Argument. Man has no notion of moral fitness but from Education. Naturally he is only a natural organ subject to Sense.'

Blake's knowledge was not certainly based on this principle, and he fought against this mechanical system all through his writings. In his Annotations to Berkeley's 'Siris' (1820), for example, he wrote:

'Knowledge is not by deduction, but Immediate by Perception or Sense at once. Christ addresses himself to the Man, not to his Reason....' 1.

Thus if we accept Miss Raine's statement that the 'philosophy of energy..... was certainly no invention of Blake's' then we indeed turn against Blake's principle. But perhaps it is appropriate to avoid using the term 'invention' about Blake who did not want to invent but rather to discover or create through his practical experience; it is not fair,

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1. Annotations to Berkeley (K. p.77<sup>4</sup>).



however, to disassociate the idea of 'Energy' from the poet whose living depended on his daily work or energy throughout his life.

All this means that Blake's philosophy of 'Energy' is neither related to Boehme's mysticism nor is it derived from Boehme. It was acquired rather through the practical experience of the poet.

Secondly the statement 'Energy is Eternal Delight' is not, contrary to Miss Raine's suggestion, within the structure of Swedenborgian thought either, but rather quite opposite to Swedenborgian thought.

'Energy is Eternal Delight' writes Miss Raine, "is still also within the structure of Swedenborgian thought.." and she goes on to quote from Swedenborg's True Christian Religion:

"Delight is the All of Life to everyone in Heaven, and the All of Life to everyone in hell: They who are in Heaven perceive the Delight of what is good and true, but they who are in Hell, the Delight of what is evil and false: for all delight is of Love, and Love is the Esse of the Life of Man; wherefore Man is Man according to the Quality of his Love, so he is Man also according to the Quality of his Delight. The activity of Love is what causeth a Sense of Delight which Activity in Heaven is attended with Wisdom, and in Hell with Insanity, each whereof in their respective Subjects exciteth Delight; but the Heavens and the Hells are in opposite Delights."

Blake 'takes for his own' argues Miss Raine, "the<sup>1.</sup> essence of this wisdom of hell...."

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1. K. Raine, op.cit., p.368.

It is true that Swedenborg uses the term 'Delight' extensively in his writings.

This is more so in Heaven and Hell and in Chapter :

'The Delights of the Life of Every One after Death are turned into correspondence ones'.

There occur similar passages to that which Miss Raine quotes, as the following illustration will show:

'...The willing affection or predominant loss remains to eternity with everyone,....the delights of that affection or love are turned into correspondent ones, ....by being turned into correspondent ones, is meant into spiritual delights which are correspondent to natural: that they are turned into spiritual delights, may be manifest from this consideration that man, so long as he is in his terrestrial body, is in the natural world, but when he leaves that body, he comes into the spiritual world, and puts on a spiritual body. The angels are in a perfect human form, and likewise men after death, and that their bodies, with which they are clothed, are spiritual....' 1.

'All the delights appertaining to man are of his ruling love, for man is not sensible of any other delight that of when he loves,....these specific delights with everyone have reference to his one love, which is the ruling love, for they compose it, and thus make one with it: in like manner all delights in general have reference to one universally ruling love, in heaven to love to the Lord, and in Hell to the love of self.' 2.

'...The delights of everyone's life are turned after death into corresponding delights .....All they who are principled in evil, and have confirmed themselves in falses against the truths of the church, especially they who have rejected the Word, shun the light of heaven, and plunge themselves into hiding places, which in the apertures appear extremely dark, and into clefts of rocks,..because they have falses and have hated truths.' 3.

1. H.H., op.cit., no.485, p.411 (our emphasis).
2. Ibid., no.486, p.411 (our emphasis).
3. H.H., no.488, p.414.



To Swedenborg, as we have seen in the thesis, the active life of those in 'Hell' or the mines is based on falsehood and the passive life of those in 'Heaven' is based on truth. The 'delights' of those in 'Heaven' are good and the 'delights' of those in 'Hell' are evil. Although the ruling affection or predominant love 'remains to eternity with everyone', and turns into 'correspondent' ones nevertheless the driving love and delights of the angels in 'Heaven' are good because they come from 'above' or the spiritual world as opposed to the earth or material world. In the chapter 'Concerning Heavenly Joy and Happiness' Swedenborg writes:

'All delights flow forth from love, for what a man loves, this he feels as delightful, nor hath he anyone delight from any other source; hence it follows, that such as the love is, such is the delight: the delight of the body or of the flesh all flow forth from the love of self and from the love of the world, hence also they are concupiscences and the pleasures attending them, but the delight of the soul or spirit all flow forth from love to the Lord and from love towards the neighbour,....' 1.

The angels in 'Heaven' look upwards to the Lord but those beings in 'Hell' look to the world.

'The delights of heaven are ineffable, and likewise are innumerable, but of those innumerable delights not one can be known nor credited by him who is in the mere delight of the body or of the flesh, since, ....his interiors look from heaven to the world,... for he who is immersed in the delight of the body..' 2.

Those who are in the world or 'body' live in opposition to the delight of heaven. They 'desire' to be admitted

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1. H.H., no.396, p.326.

2. H.H., no.398, p.327 (our emphasis).

into heaven but when they approach the portals they begin to be tortured and 'tormented':

'...The delight in which they are who are principled in the loves of self and of the world, when they approach to any heavenly society, is the delight of their concupiscence, thus likewise altogether opposite to the delight of heaven;....'

'They who are principled in the love of self and of the world approach to the first threshold of that heaven, they begin to be tortured and so interiorly tormented,.....' 1.

These passages are just random examples to show how extensively the term 'delight' is used by Swedenborg. Nevertheless all this cannot possibly mean, as Miss Raine has stated, that Blake's statement 'Energy is Eternal Delight' is 'within the structure of Swedenborgian thought'. On the contrary Blake's statement is written against and in repudiation of Swedenborg's thought or philosophy.

Blake would agree that 'delight' of affection or love are turned into correspondent ones and 'correspondent is meant into spiritual delights which are correspondent to natural', but Blake, contrary to Swedenborg, believed that 'delight' is from the 'Body'. Herein lies the philosophical difference between Swedenborg and Blake. Another difference is moral. Swedenborg, as we have shown above, regarded the 'delights' of those in 'Heaven' as good

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1. H.H., no. 400, p. 329 (our emphasis).



and based on truth but the 'delights' of those in 'Hell' or coal mines as evil because they were based on love of self and of the 'delights' of the world.

'...The delight of the body or of the flesh all flow forth from the love of self and from the love of the world,.... but the delight of the soul or spirit all flow forth from the love to the Lord....' 1.

The reason why the delight of those in 'Heaven' turns to good and truth or heavenly delight is because when they lived in the world they lived a life full of the love of God. But those who live in 'Hell' said 'infernial fire' do so because of their love of the world. In other words 'Hell' is separated from 'Heaven' because of 'driving' delight: The people in 'Hell' are in mere delight of the 'body' but those in 'Heaven' are in the delight of the 'soul' and of the 'spirit'.<sup>2.</sup>

'...The delights of the love of self and of the world are then turned into what is painful and direful, because into such things as are called infernial fire, and by turns into things defiled and filthy, corresponding to their unclean pleasures, which, what is wonderful are in such case delightful to them; but the obscure delight and almost imperceptible blessedness, which appertained to those in the world who were principled in love to God and in love towards their neighbour, is then turned into the delight of heaven, which is in every way perceptible and sensible...' 3.

Blake, defending the 'delight' of active life or 'energy'

1. H.H., no. 396, p. 326.
2. H.H., no. 400, p. 330.
3. Ibid., no. 401, p. 331.

in 'Hell' against 'delight' of passive life in 'Heaven', wrote:

'Energy is the only life, and is from the Body; and Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy.'

'Energy is Eternal Delight.' 1.

Blake indeed believed in spiritual being of man but not the kind of spiritualism which is based on selfishness. It is ironical to see that Swedenborg believed in spiritual origin of 'delight' while living amid worldly wealth and writing about precious stones in 'Heaven' whereas Blake, while working for the daily bread of his wife and himself, believed in the worldly origin of 'delight'. This irony is also the theme and the colour of language of the poet in The Marriage.

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1. M.H.H. (K. p.149).



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